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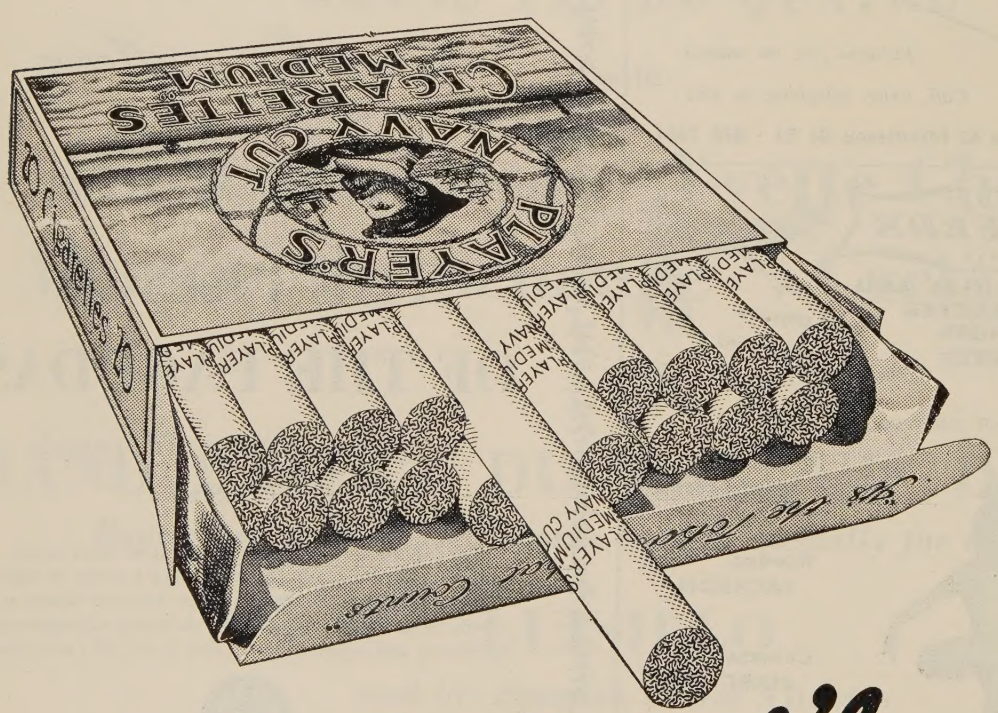

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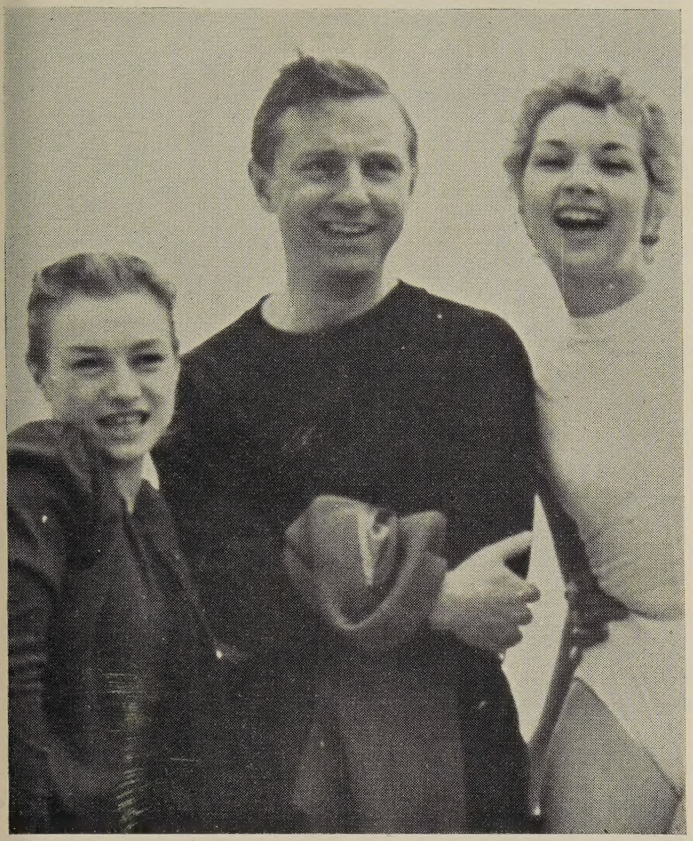
Personality of the month



JOHN TARAS between Claire Sombert and Colette Marchand, both of whom were the stars of his recent season of ballet in Monte Carlo. A review of this season appears on pages 7 to 11. *Photo: Oggero*

John Taras

IT is not entirely a coincidence that the choreographers who have contributed most to 20th century ballet have all been those attached to stable organisations. Up to now, despite a spell as ballet-master of the De Cuevas company, John Taras has lacked the opportunity to develop his talents along any consistent line with a permanent group. With the formation of a group in Monte Carlo, it may be that his talents will get the chance to prove themselves.

Taras was born in New York in 1919, and is thus nearly the exact contemporary of Jerome Robbins. His studies included work at the School of American Ballet, where he came under the influence of Balanchine. His first ballet *Graziana* was produced for Ballet Theatre in 1945, and shown in England the following year. Danced by Alonso, Kaye and Eglevsky it was a plotless ballet, very much in the Balanchine manner, with some charm but little motive force.

In 1948 he came to Europe and has worked here ever since. His first work, and still his most famous ballet, was originally created for an English company, the Metropolitan Ballet. Again a plotless ballet, and strongly impregnated with Balanchine's *Serenade*, *Designs with Strings* has since been revived all over the world. But no revival has quite captured the mood of adolescent heartbreak given to it by its original interpreters Beriosova and David Adams. There followed some years with the De Cuevas company, during which period he produced a number of ballets, the most considerable of which was his sensitive and imaginative *Piège de Lumière*. For the past three years he has been a free-lance choreographer, producing little of importance. Perhaps his most notable achievement at this time was a fine revival in Copenhagen of Balanchine's *Night Shadow*. He has not yet consistently lived up to the rich promise held out in 1948 by the beautiful *Designs with Strings*.

Well, circumstances alter cases, or at least can do. We hope that in Monte Carlo he will now be able to find the right environment and frame for his undoubted gifts.

June 1957 8th YEAR OF PUBLICATION Vol. 8 No. 6

Dance and Dancers

Editor: PETER WILLIAMS *Assistant Editor:* CLIVE A. BARNES

WORLD'S LARGEST SALE IN THE FIELD

Goodwill Mission

IN the field of international politics, diplomacy has developed into something closely resembling a novel by Ian Fleming or Eric Ambler. Diplomats nowadays have to be tough and the quickest on the trigger wins the next round. The art of conducting negotiations between nations, which is what real diplomacy is, has developed into little more than a backyard squabble. It is, therefore, extremely gratifying to discover that British ballet has not only become one of Britain's best ambassadors in foreign lands but is able to patch up misunderstandings and heal grievances.

London's Festival Ballet season in Copenhagen is a story which may be ignored by Britain's ballet historians, but it will not be forgotten by the people of Denmark. To get a true picture of what happened it is necessary to go back six years. Harald Lander, who was mainly responsible for the Royal Danish Ballet's present eminence, left his native country owing to some unpleasant happenings. At the time this magazine did not say much about it, regarding it all as a purely Danish affair and no concern of ours. This incident caused a great rumpus in Denmark and, because Lander's position was of greater importance in his native country than that of any ballet personality in other countries, it had repercussions there which have affected people far beyond the realms of the Royal Theatre. Since that time, Lander has taken up an important position at the Paris Opéra; his wife, Toni, became a ballerina with Festival Ballet.

Although there have been a vast number of Danish people who felt deeply ashamed of what happened, the whole situation was so tricky that it was not easy to bring Lander home to his own country. It could only be someone completely unconcerned with Denmark who could really achieve a reunion between Lander and his countrymen, and this, collectively, turned out to be Festival Ballet. A description of what happened on the opening night of Festival Ballet's first Copenhagen season will be found on page 17 of this issue, but the upshot of it all was that Harald Lander and his wife returned like conquering heroes.

This was quite an achievement, and Festival Ballet could well have rested on the laurels which they so emphatically won—but they did not. The whole company, without any prompting, determined among themselves that this was Toni Lander's capital and that it should be *her* season. Everyone stood in the background, so that she should receive the glory she undoubtedly deserved. The other ballerinas in the company made no attempt to push themselves, which is, after all, every ballerina's right and duty. In addition to all this, each member of the company endeared themselves to the people of Copenhagen by their charm and exceedingly good manners outside the theatre.

I quote this story which has come to me from many letters received from Danish people. Not one word of it has come from the company itself. It serves as an example of just how important a part ballet can play outside the confines of the art itself.

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BALLERINA EN ROUTE: Margot Fonteyn (one from left) enjoying the sun in Monte Carlo, where she stayed on her way to New York for the Royal Ballet's television appearance. She is seated with André Levasseur, Serge Lifar, Nina Vyroubova and a choreographer from Belgrade.

VISITORS AT WORK: Roland Petit and Zizi Jeanmaire (centre) came to take class with Les Ballets de Pâques in the famous rehearsal room at the Monte Carlo Theatre. They are seen with Miskovitch, Claire Sombert, John Taras (Ballet Master) and Veronika Mlakar.

Riviera Rendezvous

Famous dancers of the world arrived in Monte Carlo at Easter for the opening season of John Taras's new company known as Les Ballets de Pâques (The Easter Ballet)

by PETER WILLIAMS

Specially photographed by SERGE LIDO

"YOUR Margot Fonteyn, she will come, yes?" The inhabitants of the Principality of Monaco all seemed to be asking the same question. "Our Margot Fonteyn she will come, no. She will be in New York rehearsing for a big television performance," I rather briskly replied.

However, always trust local inhabitants—they know. For suddenly after a performance one evening in the Monte Carlo Theatre, there she was. "What on earth are you doing here, Margot? You should be in New York", I asked. She gave a giggle, "Well, I am on my way and I don't expect I shall be very late, but it seemed a good idea to come here for a few days. It is a bit complicated though, because my costumes and things are all in London and I am flying straight from Nice. I expect it will sort itself out somehow, as anything is possible these days." Anything with Fonteyn does appear to be possible, as she seems able to cope most successfully with her triple rôle of wife, Panamanian Ambassador's lady and *prima ballerina assoluta* of the Royal Ballet.

Then it seemed as though the whole dance world descended on Monte Carlo. Georges Hirsch, Director of the Paris Opéra, arrived and so did other members of that company—Liane Daydé, Michel Renault, Serge Lifar (to put on a ballet) and Josette Amiel and Youly Algaroff (to dance in it). Jean Babilée and Paula Hinton passed through and gave a television performance on their way to Switzerland. Zizi Jeanmaire and Roland Petit came over from Cannes to take class with John Taras.

Rosella Hightower, Nathalie Krassovska and the Golovines also came from Cannes where they had been appearing with the Marquis de Cuevas company. Hélène Trailine took time off from appearing with Charrat's Ballets de France. Ugo dell'Ara came over from Milan. The various choreographers, ballet masters, composers and designers scattered around the place all had the same idea. It got to such a pitch that it seemed as though

ALFRESCO LUNCHEON: Every day the terrace of the Café de Paris was crowded with ballet stars during the lunch hour. LEFT: Michel Renault (of the Paris Opéra) seated with Jeanmaire and Petit, watched by Taras, Vassili Lambrinos (Greek choreographer) and Youly Algaroff CENTRE: Not a couple of gypsy fortune-tellers, but Petit and Renault in an animated discussion. RIGHT: Lambrinos, Sombert, Peter Williams, Irène Lidova and Esteban Cerda, seated. Behind them is Mlakar, Levasseur and Vassili Sulich.

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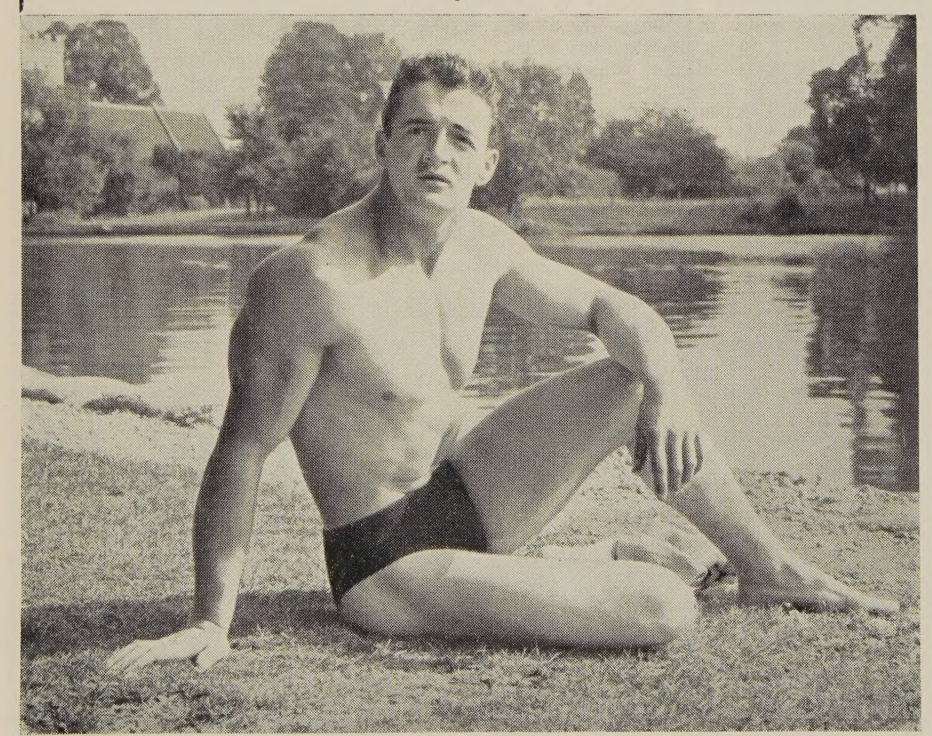

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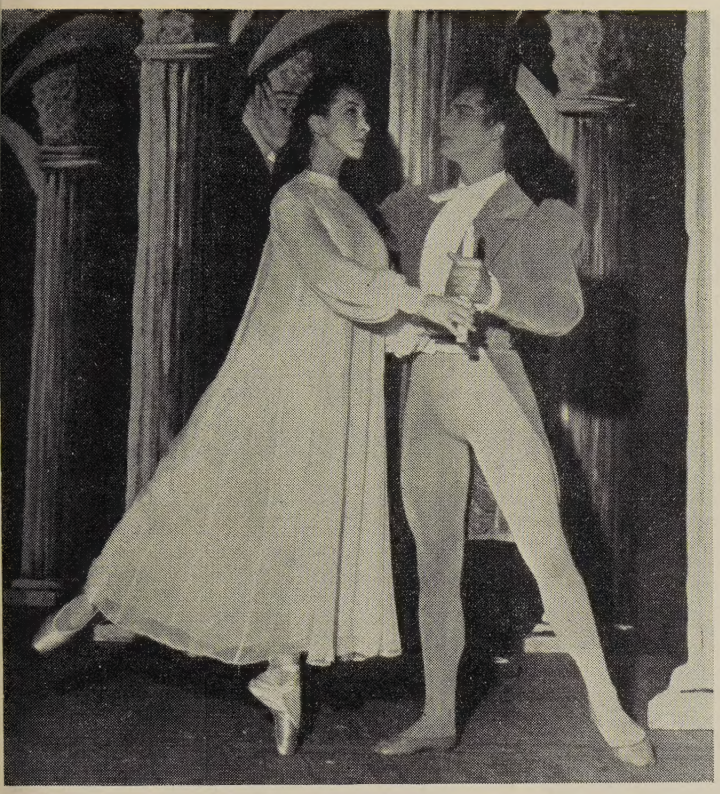


SLEEPWALKER AND POET: Nina Vyroubova and Milorad Miskovitch in the pas de deux *from Taras's revival of Balanchine's* La Somnambule *at Monte Carlo.*

COQUETTE AND BARON: Tessa Beaumont and John Taras in the scene where the Baron learns of the Poet's affection for the Sleepwalker. A moment towards the end of La Somnambule.

anyone might appear at any moment and nobody would be surprised.

On the sea, yachts of the Yacht Club de Monaco looked gay and pretty, though the lack of wind cannot have been so much fun for them. On the beach, Anton Dolin's nephew, Philip Kay, dived from the highest board to the obvious delight of those lounging around in the brilliant sun. Much in the same way as Dolin himself must have sported on the same beach over 30 years ago when he provided Nijinska with the inspiration for his athletic rôle of Le Beau Gosse in *Le Train Bleu* for the Diaghilev Ballet.

In the Casino and the foyer of the Hôtel de Paris, the wealthy and the not-so-wealthy members of Europe's deposed royalty gambled and gossiped in much the same way that they must have done when Diaghilev mounted his seasons in Monte Carlo. Nowadays the money flows less easily and it flows through different hands than of old, but the atmosphere remains the same. And it is an atmosphere which somehow seems so right as a background to a season of ballet.

This particular season, known as Les Ballets de Pâques, was a combination of various groups—Milorad Miskovitch's Ballets 1956, dancers from the Paris Opéra, members of John Taras's permanent group in Monte Carlo and guest stars, Colette Marchand and Nina Vyroubova. All were welded together by John Taras who, in the space of six weeks, achieved the miracle of making this assortment of dancers into a company which had remarkable unity. The repertoire included five creations and eight other works. The creations included *Eternel Amour* (Lifar), *Soirée Musicale* (Taras), *Les Baladins* (Taras), *La Fôret Romantique* (Taras) and *Quatuor* (Sparemblek). The revivals included *Designs for Strings* (Taras), *La Somnambule* (Balanchine), *Fanfares pour un Prince* (Taras), *Le Rideau Rouge* (Taras), *L'Echelle* (Dick Sanders), *Prométhée* (Maurice Béjart), *Suite New-Yorkaise* (Taras), *Roméo et Juliette* (Lifar).

The first programme, on April 17, opened with *Le Rideau Rouge*, which Taras had created in Monte Carlo for a gala last November (fully reported in the January DANCE AND DANCERS). It remains, what it always was, a splendid opening work and an ideal way of introducing six dancers. It has now been added to the repertoire of Miskovitch's group, Les Ballets 1956, and is extremely well danced by this very lively collection of young dancers. The cast remains almost the same as when it was created, except that Tessa Beaumont has now rejoined the company. The most effective dances in this divertissement are *L'Amour*, a difficult variation very well given by Claire Sombert, *La Passion*, by Veronika Mlakar, Vassili Sulich and Milko Sparemblek, and *La Virtuosité*, which is Sparemblek's solo. I find that I like Richard Blareau's rather obvious score less on further acquaintance, but it is adequate as a background.

This was followed by Taras's reproduction of:

La Somnambule

(*Night Shadow*)

Book and choreography by George Balanchine. Reproduced by John Taras. Music by Vittorio Rieti on themes of Bellini. Décor and Costumes by André Levasseur.

Cast:

The Baron	JOHN TARAS
The Sleepwalker	NINA VYROUBOVA
The Poet	MILORAD MISKOVITCH
The Coquette	TESSA BEAUMONT
Harlequin	HELENE ARMFELT
Negroes	VERONIKA MLAKAR, VASSILI SULICH

Corps de ballet of Horses and Guests

THE reasons for the universal popularity of *Night Shadow* are mainly that it is the very essence of Romanticism. It has a strong but simple story, and it is easier for companies, other than Balanchine's own New York City Ballet, to dance than any of his more recent creations. It does not rely so strongly on great precision and faultless technique on the part of the *corps* and the principals have rôles which need to be interpreted as well as danced.

Taras has already produced the ballet for the Royal Danish Ballet with enormous success and it was a good idea for him to stage it for this new group assembled, as it was, from dancers from various parts of the world. Apart from the natural pleasure one always gets from a good production of this ballet, the main excitement from this revival was aroused by Nina Vyroubova's interpretation of the Sleepwalker rôle. I have never seen anybody do it better.

She *bourées* across the stage as if blown by a gust of wind. She is turned and propelled by the Poet in a manner so seemingly effortless that the shock, at the end, of realising that this zephyr-blown creature has the strength to carry the Poet away in her arms, is even greater. She manages the awake-in-sleep effect so beautifully that one is unconscious of a dancer giving a "performance"—the greatest height of theatre artistry.

One moment in particular was outstanding. When the girl crosses the stage and is halted by the arm of the recumbent Poet, she steps over the arm and then halts with one foot slightly poised in the air.

Miskovitch makes a rather extrovert Poet, whereas with the rôle's other two great interpreters—George Skibine and Henning Kronstam—one gets the impression that he is a shy, sensitive character. The poetry that would be written by Miskovitch, one feels, would be more suitable for a woman's glossy magazine; with the others, their poems would surely appear in slim, well-bound volumes published at most infrequent intervals. Miskovitch partners well but with a heartiness where a tender touch would seem more suitable. Any-

one suddenly confronted by a beautiful sleep-walking woman would surely treat her with the greatest care, rather than whirl her about in an almost sadistic way. However, it is a very complex rôle and it takes a considerable time to get its full measure, and Miskovitch improved at later performances.

The rôle of the Baron is small, but it is of extreme importance to the narrative. His sinister politeness gives the atmosphere of impending doom and creates an air of suspense from the moment the Poet appears at the ball (whether or not as an invited guest has never been made quite certain). Taras gives a splendid interpretation of this rôle; it has all the decadent softness of someone who indulges himself to the full yet who can reach extreme heights of cruelty when crossed in any way.

Tessa Beaumont made a ravishing Coquette who was bound to upset any household. She did not quite suggest the kind of minx who tells tales out of school whatever the result may be. Her scene with the Baron, when she is whispering animatedly in his ear about the Poet's amatory interlude with the Sleepwalker, was not as effective as it should have been.

In the divertissement, which the Baron has arranged for the entertainment of his guests, the rôle of the Harlequin with lumbago was played by a woman. Hélène Armfelt did as much as any woman could with the rôle, playing it in a robust manner, but there was no escaping the fact that this most masculine of all theatrical stock characters lost something by a distaff interpreter. Veronika Mlakar and Vassili Sulich needed more rehearsal as the two Negro dancers. This delightful burlesque *pas de deux* needs great wit and faultless finish.

The usual dance with three hoops was replaced by four girls as ponies. It was no improvement and rather reminded me of the Amazons' dance from the opening scene of Ashton's *Sylvia*.

André Levasseur designed a semi-circular colonade for the setting. It was simple and effective enough, though it needed a little more false perspective to give a feeling of grandeur. The main fault was that there was no very satisfactory entrance for the Sleepwalker. The light of her candle was shown travelling down a corridor which hardly existed; at the end her light travels back through the arches and into the sky. One had the impression that she and the Poet were floating out into space for ever. This immediately gives the ballet a feeling of fantasy which would be appropriate were the music by any Romantic composer other than Bellini. For Weber such an effect would have been ideal, but Bellini never dealt in fantasies, and both his music and the subjects of his operas were romanticised real-life tragic situations.

The costumes were all of incredible richness, a richness that made a glittering frame for the more austere clothes of the principal players. It was a pity, I thought, to have all the girls in more or less the same design, though the colours were varied—mauve, pink and green for the girls and different coloured tail-coats and white tights for the boys. The designs for the four ponies did not seem to fit in with the general scheme and looked far too modern. Nevertheless, as is usual with Levasseur, the whole ballet had great elegance.

Rieti's arrangement of Bellini is masterly and it received a competent performance from the Monte Carlo orchestra. It is as good in its way as was Respighi's orchestration of Rossini for *La Boutique Fantasque* or Tommasini's of Scarlatti for *Les Femmes de Bonne Humeur*. In all the Diaghilev programmes, it was the original composer, not the orchestrator, who was given the main credit. I am therefore a little surprised that Rieti should receive the main credit for this ballet because, fine job as he has done, it is Bellini who makes this ballet what it is.

BALL WITH AN UNHAPPY ENDING: The Baron's guests in a general dance, over which an air of impending tragedy hangs. Miskovitch, as the Poet, is in the centre. Tessa Beaumont, as the Coquette, is seen on the right. The picture gives some idea of Levasseur's lavish costumes and setting for this recent reconstruction of Balanchine's La Somnambule.

The third work in the opening programme was:

L'Echelle

(*The Ladder*)

Book by Milko Sparemblek. Choreography by Dick Saunders. Music by Zdanko Turjak. Décor and Costumes by François Ganeau.

Cast:

The Wife	TESSA BEAUMONT
The Husband	VASSILI SULICH
The Stranger	MILKO SPAREMBLEK

IN a deserted yard in the outskirts of a town, a murder has been committed. The three people—the wife, the husband and the stranger—give their versions of the murder. Each accuses the others. Which of the three versions is the true one?

A "WHO-DUN-IT" in ballet form is a brilliant idea. To leave the spectator at the end with a question mark should also be a good idea. But the trouble is, can the spectator's interest be held long enough for him to really care? This, I am afraid, is where this admirable attempt at something new does not quite come off. If you are a person, like myself, who never reads programme notes before seeing a ballet for the first time, then I will bet my last 20 francs in the Casino fruit machines that for two-thirds of the ballet you will wonder what it is all about. If you do read programme notes, the work is still of such an abstract kind that it will take you some time to get it all sorted out. I am afraid I have not yet found out whether the husband was strangled by his wife, stabbed by the stranger, or committed suicide. The fact that the old ladies of Monte Carlo objected to the sweaty bodies of the dancers prevented the ballet from being shown again. So I have these old ladies to thank for the fact that as far as I was concerned the crime went unsolved, but they get no thanks from me for stopping further acquaintance with a work of considerably more than ordinary interest.

There is a school of choreography growing up in Paris which I mentally label "Left Bank." Dick Saunders—like that other notable young man, Maurice Béjart—is rather typical of this school. They are usually concerned, as regards subject matter, with the seamier paths of life and the darker recesses of the mind. They are very serious and they tend to litter their stages with a number of Clavé-like props. They also have interesting ideas about lighting. Not for them are the painted back-cloth and elaborate costumes. Their dancers are clad in dirty shirts and jeans or variations on the all-over tights theme. Their lot is rags and tatters rather than silks and feathers. I admire them, these eager young men, because, like our John Osborne and his play, *Look Back in Anger*, they represent something of the unstable mood of our time. Ballet for them is not a pretty bubble but a mirror held up to the workings of the contemporary mind.

I cannot say that I find all their works attractive entertainment, but to have one of them in a programme of this kind strikes the kind of balance which I find to be essential in good programme building.

Saunders's choreography is modern and I would think has been influenced to a certain extent by Martha Graham. On the other hand the classical vocabulary has not been ignored and he has fused it well into his very personal style. Everything is rather too violent and he has a tendency to make everyone suffer too much. Over-emphasis on suffering is likely to become infectious until, in the end, no feeling of pity can be wrung from the audience.

He uses props a great deal and much of the time is spent clambering about them. In this

THREE IN DEATH STRUGGLE: Vassili Sulich, as the Man who died. Milko Sparemblek as the Stranger who intruded. Tessa Beaumont as the wife of the man who died. One of these is responsible for the Man's death in Dick Saunders' ballet L'Echelle.

number of items invariably found in backyard junk and which were well lit. The costumes were suitably mundane. Turjac's score was noisy and monotonous, which is presumably just what was intended; it certainly gave the whole work a harshness and violence.

THE final work in this programme—*Suite New-Yorkaise*—was, like the opening ballet, originally created for a gala at the same theatre last November (also reviewed in full in our January issue). For a gala occasion it then seemed highly suitable, but when placed in a programme which includes works such as Balanchine's *La Somnambule*, it suddenly seemed too frothy. Every month we seem to be learning the lesson that ballets concocted for special occasions should not be repeated. Colette Marchand is good, in a musical comedy way, as the ideal of a sentimental young man. Sulich, as this said young man, gave a far more polished performance than when the ballet was first created. Some of the best dancing still comes from Jenny Trevelyan as a Debutante; she executes some fine supported *jetés* in the ballroom scene. De Monfred's score is too much like film background music and its catchy tunes become cloying with repetition. It seems, though, that we have been having these New York ballets in every revue for the past 30 years and it is time the locale was changed. Also, the kind of dancing which is more suitable to cabaret and American musicals needs a special training and the dancers have to present themselves so that they bridge the gap between the audience and the stage. Admittedly in this group there were a number of dancers who understood this, as they regularly take part in the cabaret performances in Monte Carlo; the rest, however, looked rather self-conscious.

Altogether this opening programme of Les Ballets de Pâques was well-balanced, thoroughly entertaining and raised hopes for the two following programmes, which will be reviewed in full next month.

case I felt that if I saw the dancers climb up and down a ladder any more I should commit murder myself, or if I saw any more of the cast entangled in pieces of rope.

Each of the three episodes opens with the three dancers alone in a spotlight with their backs to the audience, standing as if accused by a court in this or the next world. It made an effective chapter-opening. Then the lights go out and fade into the three scenes which portray the differing versions of each of the protagonists.

The dancing had great polish all through. Sulich, a rapidly improving dancer with a stage appearance somewhat similar to Manolo Vargas, had to suffer death three times and did so most convincingly. Tessa Beaumont varied her portrayal of the Wife according to who was telling the story—tender and loving in one, hard and brittle in the other, and seductive in the third. Not an easy task in such a short space of time, but she brought it off very well.

As the Stranger who intrudes on the private life of the other two, Sparemblek was outstanding. He was like a kind of contemporary Til Eulenspiegel—mischievous, attractive and wicked in turn. He has to do a series of deep *pliés à la seconde* on half-point, which he achieves with great brilliance, and somehow this movement gives the lie to his whole character. Sparemblek is one of the outstanding male dancers of today and he has a most unusual personality. He should be the Harlequin of our time and this quality was also realised by Taras in *Les Baladins*, given later in the season, but not yet exploited to the full.

Ganeau's atmospheric décor consisted of a

HARLEQUIN REHEARSAL: Milko Sparemblek and Colette Marchand rehearse Les Baladins *on the terrace of the Monte Carlo Casino. This Taras creation, based on a typical Commedia dell'Arte episode to music by Jean-Michel Damase, will be reviewed in full next month. The charming black and white costumes were designed by André Levasseur.*

BALLET IN LENINGRAD

WINTER SNOW: Famous among ballet-lovers throughout the world, Leningrad's Theatre Street, now known as Rossi Street after the architect who planned its classical façade of blue and white, has the Leningrad Ballet School on the right. At the end is the Pushkin Theatre.

THE former Imperial Ballet School of St. Petersburg, which produced almost all the great personalities of Russian ballet in the past—from Kchessinskaya and Preobrajenskaya through to Fokine, Karsavina, Pavlova and Nijinsky—is still carrying on its great unbroken tradition as the Leningrad Ballet School.

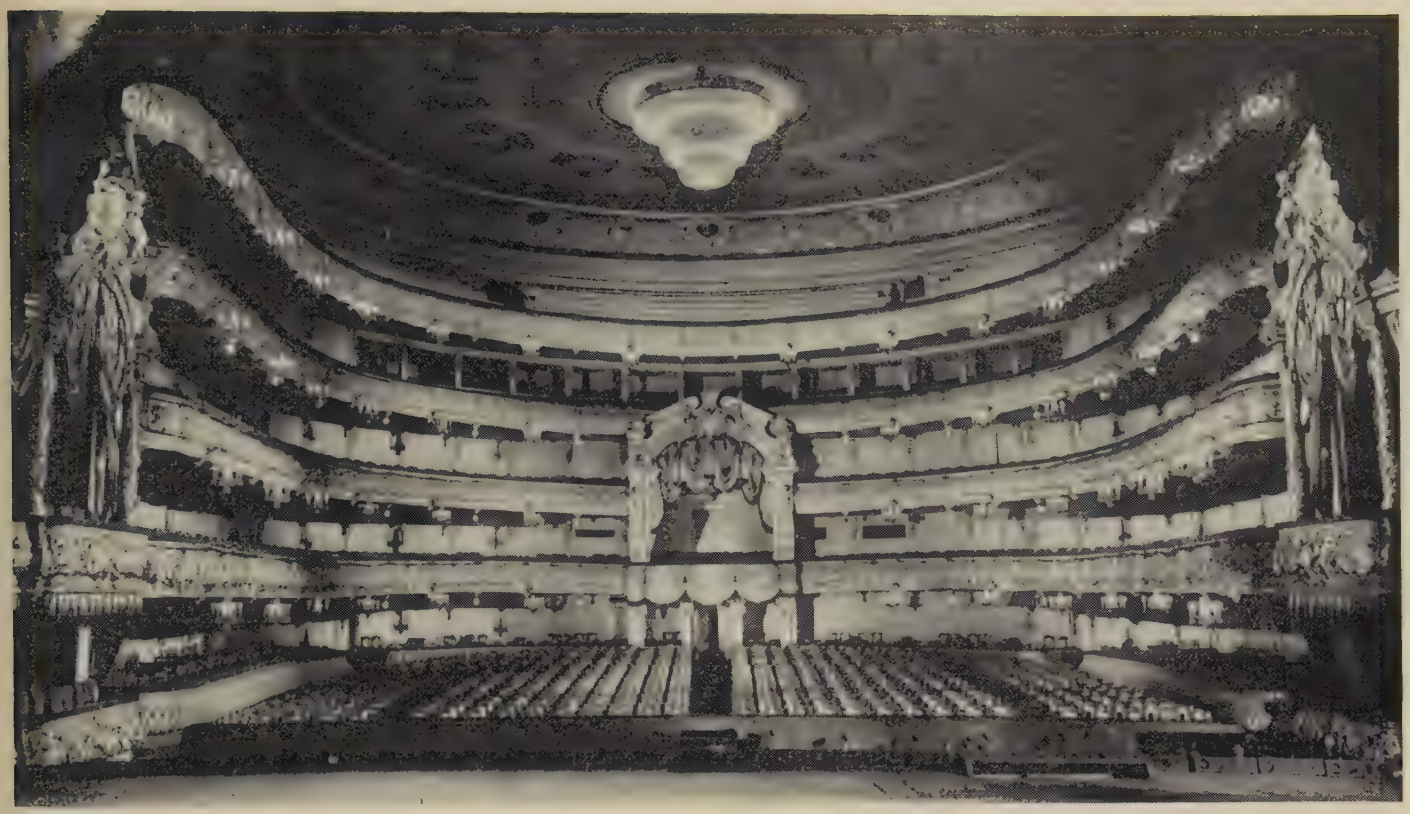
Last February, Evan Senior, editor of Music and Musicians, **went to Leningrad and took the photographs on this page. These and other pictures of ballet, in Leningrad and Moscow, will appear in his illustrated book,** *Critic in Russia,* **to be published later in the year by John Calder Ltd. It is hoped to publish in a later number of** DANCE AND DANCERS **further advance pictures from this book, including some of ballet classes in the Bolshoi Ballet School.**

FINAL YEAR: These girls are in what the Leningrad School calls its Eighth Class, the final class before promising pupils graduate and pass into the company at the Kirov Theatre, formerly the Maryinsky.

TEACHER DEMONSTRATES: Former Kirov Theatre ballerina Lydia Tuntina, a member of the company for 18 years, passes on the Maryinsky tradition of classical ballet to the new generation.

BALLET HISTORY: Ebullient teacher Mariette Frangopoulo, former Maryinsky ballerina, is head of the "Method Cabinet," where training methods are planned, ballet research undertaken and ballet history preserved. She shows students portraits of famous dancers of the past lining the walls.

FUTURE STARS: These boys are in their last year of school before graduating to either the Kirov or other theatre ballets, working under teacher Abdarachman Kounisnikov, himself a Kirov Ballet dancer. His pupils come from all parts of the Soviet Union—from Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Russia.



ABOVE:
When the young dancers graduate, they move from the School to the ballet of the lovely Kirov Theatre, known before the Revolution as the Maryinsky Theatre, headquarters in Tsarist days of the great Imperial Ballet. Decorated in soft blue, white and gold, the theatre is one of the most beautiful in Russia. In the centre is the former Imperial Box.

BELOW:
Latest new production of the Leningrad Ballet was Spartacus, *the great spectacle with music by Aram Khatchaturian, first given on December* 27 *last year, soon to be staged at the Bolshoi in Moscow, and described in pictures on pages* 14 *and* 15. *Here is the opening scene, the triumph of Crassus, with the captured Spartacus and Egina at right.*

SPARTACUS AT THE KIROV

First given at the Kirov (Maryinsky) Theatre, Leningrad, on December 27, 1956. Ballet in four acts. Story by Nikolai Volkov. Music by Aram Khatchaturian. Choreography by L. Yakobson. Scenery and Costumes by V. Khodasievitch.

CAST

Egina	ALLA SHELEST or OLGA MOISEYEVA
Spartacus	ASKOLD MAKAROV or BORIS BRIGVADZE
Phrygia	NINEL PETROVA or INNA ZUBKOVSKAYA
Crassus	ROBERT GERBEK
Harmodius	KONSTANTIN SHATILOV or IGOR UKUZNIKOV

Corps de ballet and soloists: *Gladiators, Soldiers, Merchants, Slaves, Dancers, etc.*

SEDUCTION: The consul Crassus, attempting to break up the rebellion of the slaves led by Spartacus, sends Egina (Olga Moiseyeva), his favourite dancer, to seduce Harmodius (Konstantin Shatilov), the chief lieutenant of the rebel army.

ONE of the largest ballets produced in Russia in recent years, *Spartacus*—in Russia it is called *Spartak*—was first planned some five years ago. The story is based on the novel of the same name by the 19th-century Italian writer Rafaello Giovagnoli, a book popular in Russia today and known to almost all.

The Armenian-born composer Aram Khatchaturian, writer of another famous ballet, *Gayaneh*, completed the large score by the middle of 1954, when the Editor of *Music and Musicians*, in Moscow at the time, heard a performance of it reduced for two pianos, and wrote about the new work in *Music and Musicians* of September, 1954.

When Khatchaturian visited London later in that year he brought with him tape-recordings of the two-piano performance which he played, giving a description of the action, in public.

The story is based on the historical fact of the rebellion of slaves in Rome in 73 B.C., led by the Thracian captive Spartacus.

The action begins with the triumphal procession through Rome of the consul Crassus (illustrated on page 13), in which captured booty and prisoners, including Spartacus and his beloved Phrygia, are paraded

REUNION: Spartacus, leading the attack of his rebel army on the home of the consul Crassus, sacks the palace and rescues his beloved Phrygia, sold as a slave into Crassus' home. (Boris Brigvadze and Ninel Petrova).

FIGHT TO THE DEATH: In the arena of the Roman Circus, an exciting scene in Act II, slave Gladiators are pitted against each other to provide blood-spectacle for the Roman mob. Here are Grigorovitch and Malzev as two of the Gladiators in one of the savage battle-dances.

REBEL LEADER: Askold Makarov as Spartacus, Gladiator-leader of the rebellion of the slaves, plans the attack on Rome.

SLAVES: Spartacus and Phrygia, captured by the Roman army, are parted, he to fight as a Gladiator, she to be a slave in the house of the consul, Crassus. But the lovers swear to be faithful. (Makarov and Zubkovskaya).

FAVOURITE: Alla Shelest, who danced in Britain with a 1953 Soviet concert party, as Crassus's favourite, Egina.

before the people of Rome.

Spartacus is condemned to fight to the death as a gladiator in the Roman arena, and Phrygia is taken as a slave to Crassus's palace.

In the Gladiators' barracks after a bloody fight, Spartacus stirs the other slaves to rebellion. They escape, and the rebel forces, joined by peasants, make a stand in the mountains outside the city. Attacking Rome, they sack and burn the palace of Crassus, and Spartacus rescues Phrygia and takes her to safety in the mountains.

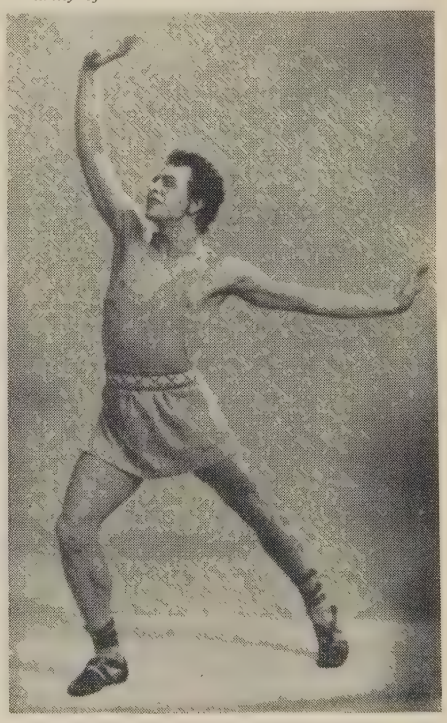
The Roman rulers decide to break up the rebellion from within. They send merchants with rich gifts to tempt the impoverished slaves, and Crassus commands his favourite dancer, Egina, to seduce Harmodius, the chief lieutenant of Spartacus.

Faced by large defections of his slave army, divided against itself by internal quarrels and greed, Spartacus makes a final stand on the seashore, accompanied by the faithful Phrygia. Trapped by Crassus and his legions, the remnants of the slave army are defeated, and Spartacus and Phrygia die together in sight of the ship which could take them to safety. In the finale, they see a vision of eventual liberty which the world would one day enjoy.

TEMPTATION: Tatiana Legat as one of the dancers in the revels at the palace of Crassus, a large-scale scene which includes spectacular national dances by groups of slaves.

COMMAND: Crassus, to undermine the resistance of the rebels, orders Egina (Shelest) to the rebel camp to beguile Harmodius away from the army.

GLADIATOR: Harmodius, in early scenes of the ballet, is one of the Gladiators who join Spartacus, to become his lieutenant in the army of rebel slaves.



What Rambert is up Against

by DAVID ELLIS

CRITICISED REVIVAL: That Ballet Rambert should have to resort to a revival of Coppélia *was recently deplored in this magazine. Here is a scene from the first act of this production. Swanilda (Patricia Dyer) and Frantz (Norman Dixon) are seen in the* Corn Adage. *The settings and costumes are by Doboujinsky. Photo: John Chesworth*

The leading article in the March DANCE AND DANCERS criticised the lack of adventurous spirit shown by some British companies of late and deplored the lack of new works. Among those criticised was Ballet Rambert which, in the past, showed more spirit of adventure than any other British company.

David Ellis, a director of Ballet Rambert, here explains the many difficulties which beset Ballet Rambert today.

WHILE correcting an error in a recent DANCE AND DANCERS editorial concerning the Ballet Rambert, I thought it might be of some interest to cover a wider field and set out some of the real problems and aspirations of the company as seen from the point of view of one of the directors.

There is perhaps a tendency to treat the Ballet Rambert rather in the way that many people dismiss the Liberal Party. Like the Liberal Party, the Ballet Rambert has had a brilliant and profoundly important past. I am sure that many of its potential supporters tend to behave like those who say, "Of course I am a Liberal at heart," but feel they should give their support to more powerful parties. It really is very important for the future that this attitude and myth be radically changed.

The Ballet Rambert is the oldest and smallest of the present four professional English ballet companies, and apart from the Royal Ballet organisations, the only ballet company receiving direct financial support from the Arts Council. This financial assistance and the existence of its own large school gives the Ballet Rambert a certain stability even though it no longer has its own London theatre in which to perform.

Post-war swamping

Since the war, the company has to some extent been swamped by the vast ramifications of the Royal Ballet. During the early part of the war when both companies were run by CEMA, I imagine their grants, though probably not equal, must have been at any rate, on a comparable scale. Today, while the Covent Garden and Sadler's Wells Trusts receive hundreds of thousands of pounds annually (to subsidise the more expensive opera companies as well as the ballet), the Ballet Rambert's grant is still limited to £5,000.

Unfortunately, today, the sphere of work of the Ballet Rambert is much the same as that of the other ballet companies and this vast difference of income, quite apart from any artistic considerations, puts the company at a great disadvantage. With the closing of so many of the smaller theatres and the policy of continued touring by the Sadler's Wells division of the Royal Ballet, the Ballet Rambert is being seen in the same theatres as that company and the Festival Ballet. With our vastly smaller resources we cannot provide large *corps de ballet*, or even a permanent orchestra under contract for the year. We therefore look—because we are—a smaller show with less obvious popular appeal to the ordinary theatre-goer.

Forced to tour

If touring in England is an essential part of the rôle of a permanent ballet company (the present almost permanent touring of the Royal Ballet, Sadler's Wells Division, would seem to prove this point) and the Ballet Rambert is financially at so serious a disadvantage, why do we continue as a company? Is it just the objection of any living organisation to death? Or is there justification for the very real sacrifices that are constantly being made by all members of this company? I personally feel that the answer to this question involves many problems vital to the future of English ballet.

Firstly, we do not expect our present degree of penury to be permanent. We look forward to the day when larger grants will be possible. We have opened an Endowment Fund and last year the Pilgrim Trust gave us £5,250 to tide us over until this comes about. Secondly, we hope to have our own theatre again in Notting Hill Gate. We can therefore look forward to becoming a compact independent Arts Council-sponsored company with its own theatre and school backed by a reasonable financial reserve. Thus our real problems are those of the present and immediate future, faced with the difficulties mentioned above.

How have we got into these difficulties? Since the war the Ballet Rambert has not really found its place. Its original home, the Mercury Theatre, had become too small. New audiences in London and the provinces were growing up who saw ballet no longer as a new, exciting and perhaps rather controversial form of art, but as full-blooded commercial theatrical entertainment. With the Royal Ballet superbly fulfilling this new need here and all over the world, is there really any justification now and in the future for a smaller officially backed company independent of this big organisation? I believe profoundly that there is, and a proper understanding of this would do much to remove the "Liberal Myth" referred to above and so establish the Ballet Rambert in its rightful place in English ballet life. Properly organised, with permanent subsidy and theatre, school and headquarters, I feel such a company is essential. Every country with a living ballet life has always needed two groups. France has always had the Opéra and Opéra Comique; Russia, Moscow and Leningrad; America, the New York City Ballet and Ballet Theatre. Even Canada, the latest country to have an officially-backed ballet life, has the National Ballet and the Royal Winnipeg Ballet.

Much as one admires the Royal Danish Ballet (and takes into account the relative populations involved) it is probable that even a small second company might have made more interesting the long period between Bournonville and the last war, during which the theatre would appear to have been outside the influence of the work of contemporary choreographers. Much of the vitality of the De Basil, Massine and Blum Companies before the last war lay in the competition and interactions between them.

Apart from its stimulating presence, an alternative and smaller company can perform certain functions essential to a live ballet tradition which are impossible to a vast organisation.

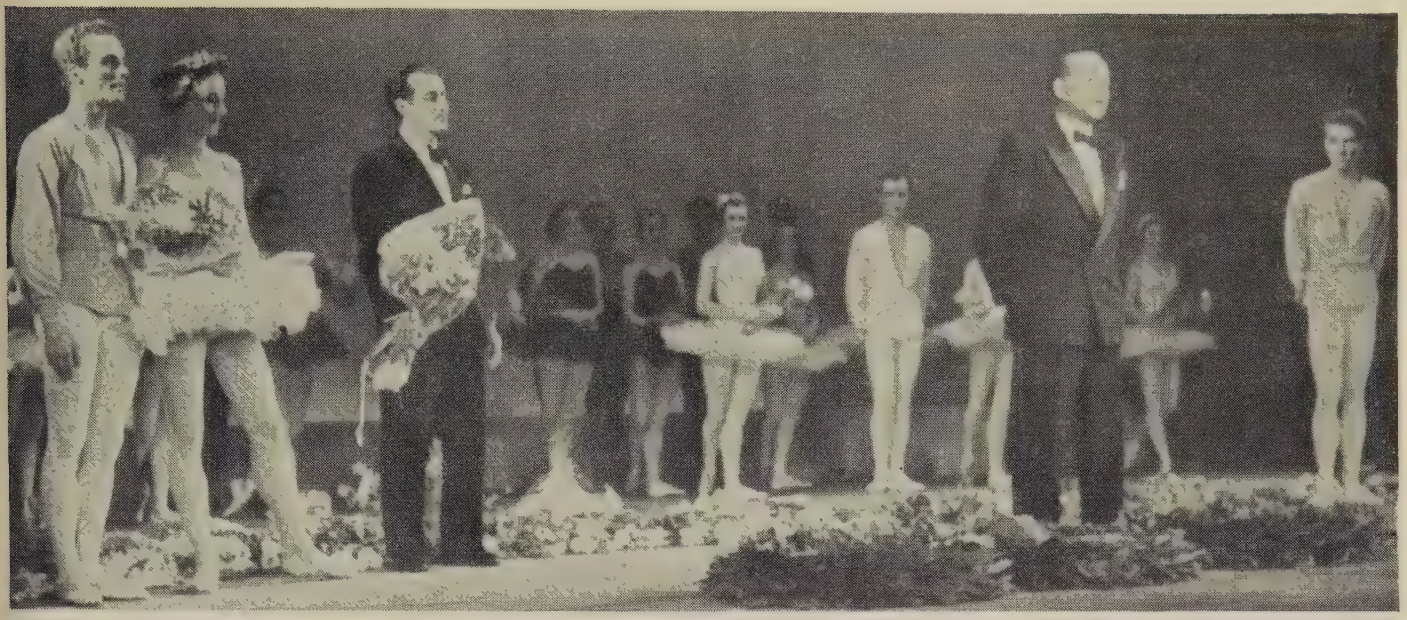
The most important of these is that it can take certain risks and quick decisions which are justified artistically but which might be difficult to defend by a large organisation owing to the enormous expenditure of public money involved. On a much smaller scale this was the original *raison d'être* of Ballet Workshop, and in the five years for which I ran it, its efforts proved highly rewarding to English ballet generally. The artists to whom it gave first opportunities have been the collaborators of recent ballets for all the English companies. It has proved a stimulus both here and abroad in many ways, not only in the field of pure ballet, but for films, musicals, revues, etc. If a minute organisation like Ballet Workshop can produce these effects, how much more important could be the work of the Ballet Rambert when firmly established?

Opposition to stimulus

It should always be remembered that it is no automatically implied criticism of a government for it to have a "loyal Opposition." But the presence of such an opposition does imply a certain degree of freedom of ideas, and freedom from a monopoly which could, as perhaps in the case of the Royal Danish Ballet, tend to become a restrictive dictatorship.

With regard to the mistake in a recent issue of DANCE AND DANCERS to which I referred earlier, it was stated that the Ballet Rambert's only new presentation last year was a full-length production of *Coppélia*. In fact, we also produced *The Mirror*, a new ballet by

continued on page 38



HAPPY RETURN: Harald Lander, obviously moved by the tremendous ovation he received from the Danish audience, makes a speech of thanks in Danish. He was led on to the stage by Anton Dolin after Festival Ballet's opening performance in Tivoli. Also in the picture are, from left to right: John Gilpin, Toni Lander, Anton Dolin. On the extreme right is Flemming Flindt who was also formerly a member of the Royal Danish Ballet. Photo: Keystone

The Landers return in triumph

FESTIVAL Ballet's season in the Tivoli Concert Hall, Copenhagen, from March 29 to April 7, not only won resounding success for the company, but it also brought a happy conclusion to what has been a sad chapter of Danish ballet history.

Six years ago Harald Lander and his wife, Toni, left Denmark as victims of unpleasant intrigue. Lander had served the Royal Danish Ballet faithfully as Ballet Master for 20 years and had raised the status of the company from that of an artistic backwater to one of the three finest ballet companies in the western world, and yet he was obliged to resign his post. In the intervening years he has worked in Paris and is a Ballet Master at the Paris Opéra. By her performances with Festival Ballet, Toni Lander has won international fame as a ballerina.

After the opening performance of Festival Ballet in Copenhagen on March 29, Anton Dolin made a speech in which he mentioned "that mountain of nonsense" which took Lander away from Denmark. Then he led Lander on to the stage. The audience let themselves go in welcoming him back and nearly tore the house down. He was presented with laurel wreaths from members of Festival Ballet, the Paris Opéra Ballet and from the Royal Danish Ballet. Toni Lander was presented with a laurel crown by members of the Royal Danish Ballet and, later, she was awarded the Knight Cross of the Order of Dannebrog (the Danish equivalent to the British D.B.E.) by King Frederick who, together with Queen Ingrid, received the Landers in their box after the performance.

The evening, which had been punctuated by protracted curtain calls, reached its climax after the performance of Lander's ballet *Etudes*, in which his wife gave a remarkable performance. John Gilpin and Belinda Wright were also highly regarded and were given rave notices by the critics, as, in fact, did the whole company, whom the Danes took to their hearts.

The Royal Theatre has now stated officially that it will start negotiations as soon as possible with Harald Lander to stage some of his ballets there. It would be safe to predict that this will mark the beginning of a new and distinguished chapter in Danish ballet history.

Bent Schönberg

FLOWERS FOR THE LANDERS: Anton Dolin hands a bouquet to Harald Lander, who is surrounded by laurel wreaths. Toni Lander wears on her head the laurel crown which was presented by the Royal Danish Ballet. The orchestra's contribution was a "touche," a rare honour in which all the players strike a chord.

ROYAL RECEPTION: King Frederick receives Toni and Harald Lander in the Royal box after the performance and welcomes them home. Toni thanks him for the Knight Cross of the Order of Dannebrog, which had been bestowed on her during the evening. King Frederick attended four of the 10 performances Festival Ballet gave in Copenhagen.

What YOU think

Readers are invited to write to the Editor airing their views and posing any ballet problems.

No emotion in Petrushka

SIR: Having recently paid a visit to Covent Garden to see the new production of *Petrushka*, I could not but agree with some of the general criticisms of our beloved Royal Ballet lately expressed in DANCE AND DANCERS.

I was greatly puzzled as to why this obviously loving reconstruction of the great ballet failed to move the audience or to strike one spark of pity from a more-than-usually vulnerable onlooker. It is easy to say that the great Petrushkas are born and not made, or that the mood of this work is somewhat alien to an English company—but our dancers have surmounted similar hurdles successfully in the past and it is hard to understand why they fell at this one.

Upon reflection, it seems to me that this production—so brilliant and colourful with its excellent and natural crowd-work and its efficient execution—lacked that most essential quality for *Petrushka*, the power of the dancers to project the deeply-felt emotions of the human heart. I sat admiring the technical feats, the fascinating kaleidoscope of ever-changing patterns and I breathed a most authentic atmosphere. But if one remains indifferent to the sorrow of Petrushka and is unable to weep for the shallow, unfeeling crowd, where is the point of the ballet or of its entrancing music? Where was the sinister quality of the Charlatan, the bawdiness of the Blackamoor, the stupidity of the Ballerina?

A glance at the programme notes convinced me of the truth of the assertion that more attention should be paid to the production details as they concern the plot. The carelessness apparent in this production (as also in *Swan Lake* and others) does not help the dancers in their quest for dramatic intensity. The so-called seduction of the Ballerina by the Blackamoor amounted to nothing more than a few feeble perambulations around the cell and provided no reasonable ground for Petrushka's subsequent anger and jealousy. The death-blow in the performance I witnessed was a most ineffectual swipe in the general direction of Petrushka, which made his immediate fall appear ridiculous. A little less wall-beating in the second tableau would endear us rather more to Petrushka and, if at the end his spirit is indeed "mocking the magician and those he has fooled," could not some of the latter be present when he re-appears. A thrill of horror and fear through the crowd at this juncture would heighten the dramatic value of the ballet's closing moments.

The very sound of the word "Petrushka" brings to mind those well-worn phrases, "the puppet made of sawdust, but with a soul," "the agony and torment of the down-trodden," "the callous world," etc. Being a diligent reader of DANCE AND DANCERS, I know that Anton Dolin will be angry when I say that in the hands of the Bolshoi these phrases might come to glorious life. However, perhaps Dolin would forgive me when I recall that, though his crowd is not so large and splendid, Festival Ballet's production comes much nearer the heart of the matter.

Maisie Ditton

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Let's wave a flag for Britain

SIR: In recent issues of DANCE AND DANCERS Clive Barnes has made some very caustic comments about the Covent Garden Royal Ballet. In particular he criticises the present productions of *Swan Lake* and *The Sleeping Beauty*, and also laments the lack of mature mime dancers. No one who visits Covent Garden regularly will dispute the justice of Mr. Barnes' remarks, but at the same time, I for one am becoming a little sickened by the increasing abject self-effacement in ballet reports of our national company since the visit of the Bolshoi.

Of course the Bolshoi season was an unforgettable experience. *Of course* they are a wonderful company, and we all hope they will return in the very near future. But let us wipe the steam of exuberance from our spectacles for a moment.

I was also puzzled at the irrational praise showered on their male dancers during the season by the popular Press. One would be led to suppose from the tone of some reviews that this country had never seen a good male dancer before. It will be conceded that we do not possess anyone with the dramatic intensity of S. Koren, but in Alexander Grant we have the answer to Farmanyants, and surely in Ashton, Powell and White we have some of the finest character dancers we have ever had. Yuri Kondratov and Michael Somes are well matched, and Philip Chatfield has romantic capabilities easily equal to those of Yuri Zhdanov. The delightfully effervescent Vassili Khomjakov and Brian Shaw have the same ebullient approach to their dancing, while John Hart as Orion can be as successfully disturbing as Alexander Lapauri portraying Khan Girei.

Regarding the *corps de ballet*, most of the criticism of our *corps* seems to be on dramatic rather than balletic grounds. I am positive that as far as agility, unity and precision are concerned, we walk hand in hand with our Russian comrades. For instance, the Infernal Dance in the second scene of our *Firebird* compares favourably with the Bolshoi's Warrior Dance in Act IV of *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai*. The most glaring difference between the two *corps* was to be found in the ballroom scene of *Swan Lake*. In our version, we tend to suppress any movement likely to distract attention from the central action, whereas the Russians treat their *corps* and principals as one narrative unit, with the members of the court thoroughly enjoying every moment.

Until our finances permit us to do things on the same lavish scale as the Bolshoi, to give our productions a bright new scrub and some Russian tinsel, we shall continue to be theatrically over-shadowed by them.

However, British Ballet has achieved its greatness through stubborn uphill plodding on its own tiny feet, with precious little financial support. Let us look back with pride at what we have constructed, and at what the brave few have attained by their determination in those hazardous first days. Despite some weaknesses in production, we are the most virile and versatile company in the world, and we are developing all the time.

Brian Doughty

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Worcester Park, Surrey

No cracks at The Nutcracker

SIR: Why pick on the Festival Ballet's performances of *The Nutcracker*? I saw this company perform the ballet four times (twice at the Festival Hall, twice at the Stoll) and was enchanted.

I *liked* the décor and general production, and particularly enjoyed those scenes which you criticise most. Perhaps I attended on occasions when the company was "on form." Personally I have never found them otherwise.

Peter du Garde

Fortess Road
London, N.W.5

Sleeping Beauty in Denmark

First given at the Maryinsky Theatre, St. Petersburg, on January 1, 1890. Music by Tchaikovsky. Choreography by Marius Petipa.

First given at the Royal Theatre, Copenhagen, on March 8, 1957. Marius Petipa's choreography reproduced by Dame Ninette de Valois assisted by Peggy Van Praagh. Décor and Costumes by André Delfau.

Princess Aurora MARGRETHE SCHANNE
Prince Florimund HENNING KRONSTAM
(The second cast *Princess Aurora* was KIRSTEN SIMONE.)

THIS production of *The Sleeping Beauty*, which is said to have cost around £15,000, was not altogether very lucky.

The principal dances from this three-act ballet are well known in Copenhagen, as for some years a version of *Aurora's Wedding* has been in the Danish repertoire. Now that we have the three acts and prologue, the work is generally considered by the Danish people to be too long and too dull. Above all it was felt that if you are going to have brilliant choreography, which Petipa's undoubtedly is, then you must have brilliant dancers to execute it. Unfortunately the particular qualities of the Danish dancers do not number extreme brilliance of technique among them. The designs of Delfau were not in the best of taste and the orchestra never did full justice to Tchaikovsky's score. The lighting was poor and there never seemed to be enough people on the stage.

Of course there are many things to enjoy in this production, thanks to Dame Ninette's great sense of theatrical effects and the successful way in which she reproduced the inventive richness of Petipa's choreography. Certainly she is not to blame for the fact that she could not find the dancers she needed. Just how good an instructor she is could be seen in the dancing of Henning Kronstam who gave a delightful performance as the Prince, which has been praised by everyone. Kirsten Simone, as the second-cast Aurora, sparkled and gave great promise for the future. Unfortunately, her performances have not been up to standard since she has not had the personal supervision of Dame Ninette. As the first Aurora, Margrethe Schanne danced well, but she was unable to make the audience believe in the character of the young Princess.

The main criticism against the production is that it lacks atmosphere. To Danish people a fairytale atmosphere means a great deal, brought up as they are on the works of their countrymen—Hans Andersen and Bournonville. Possibly these fairytales are more real to them than to the inhabitants of any other country in the world. *The Sleeping Beauty*, which seems at Covent Garden to be unique and sparkling, seemed altogether interminable in Copenhagen.

Just as English dancers are unlikely to be good in the works of our Bournonville, so it seems are the works from the Imperial Maryinsky Theatre, which have become an integral part of the British repertoire, unsuitable to Danish dancers.

Perhaps it will be possible for the Royal Theatre to invite Dame Ninette again to stage some other ballets more suited to the company. She proved to be such an inspiring instructor that this, combined with the discipline, good nature and rare sense of naivity which is what all the Danish dancers have, could make a very valuable addition to our repertoire.

Bent Schönberg

CHRISTENING PARTY: Dancers of the Royal Danish Ballet in the Prologue of the Tchaikovsky-Petipa The Sleeping Beauty, *which Dame Ninette de Valois and Peggy Van Praagh mounted in Copenhagen in March. The production followed the lines of the version now given by the Royal Ballet at Covent Garden. This version was brought to Western Europe by Sergueeff, who reproduced the choreography by means of his own system of notation, and is the one most generally seen outside Russia today. There are many differences between this version and the famous Diaghilev production at the Alhambra Theatre given in London in* 1921. *Diaghilev felt at that time that as the full-length classics were not generally popular with audiences, as they are today, that certain cuts and changes had to be made in order to tighten the whole work up. Some of these changes have still been retained in the versions now given in London and Copenhagen. It is possible that International Ballet, with which Sergueeff was associated for many years, gave the version nearest to the original St. Petersburg production of* 1890.

photographed by Mydtskov

TWO AURORAS: (Left) Margrethe Schanne, as Princess Aurora, with Henning Kronstam, as Prince Florimund, in the grand pas de deux *from the final act of* The Sleeping Beauty. *Schanne danced this principal rôle on the opening night.*

(Right) Kirsten Simone, who headed the second cast, as Princess Aurora in Act I. Simone is one of the most promising of the young dancers of the Royal Danish Ballet. She was seen at Covent Garden in The Nutcracker pas de deux *with Erik Bruhn when the company came to London in* 1953.

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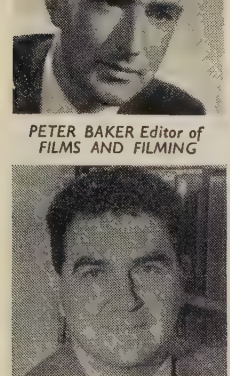

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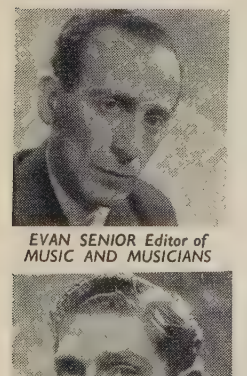

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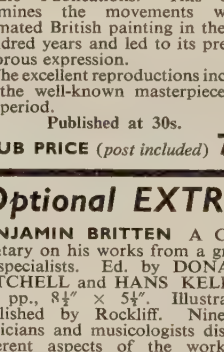

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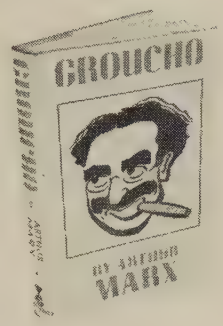

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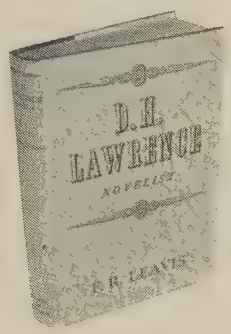

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Backstage at Covent Garden : 2

The Stage Manager

THE chatter ceases as the house lights gradually dim and an expectant hush falls on the audience. The conductor enters to the accompaniment of a short burst of applause, mounts the rostrum, raises his arms and the performance has begun. Backstage there is a feeling of suppressed tension, the dancers are having a final warm-up, the lights are set to the opening cue, the dancers quietly move to their opening positions in the ballet and the curtain rises.

Whether the Royal Ballet is playing at Covent Garden or away from home, either in Britain or abroad, the immediate preliminaries are just the same. It all seems to go through so easily and without any sense of effort on anybody's part, yet few people on the audience side of the curtain have any idea as to just how much planning and hard work has gone on previously to see that the wheels are greased to make the performance run smoothly.

The dancers can dance magnificently, but their efforts will amount to nothing if they are not presented properly. The main responsibility for this presentation on the stage lies in the work of the stage manager. He it is who is in charge of all those boring jobs in the theatre which get little praise if they are well done, but inevitably occasion angry cursing if something goes even slightly wrong. Nobody would be such an idiot to take on a job of this kind unless he really loved the theatre through and through.

The bug got him

Michael Manuel, the Royal Ballet's stage manager really does love the theatre. The bug got him at the highly dangerous age of 14 when he was living in Golder's Green. He had backstage experience first in amateur shows and also at the Royal Academy of Music. Then he worked for two years with the opera company at Covent Garden. He also spent some time in Paris, where he worked at the Opéra and in other theatres. In 1950 he returned to London and went to Covent Garden under Louis Yudkin, who was so tragically killed in a plane crash. In 1951, Manuel was appointed stage manager to the Sadler's Wells Ballet and was, at the time, one of the youngest people to hold such a position at the Royal Opera House.

He is interested in ballet not so much for its own sake, but because it is an important branch of theatre as a whole. Dancing took on a more personal interest for him when he married Fiorella Kean, who used to be a distinguished member of the *corps de ballet* at Covent Garden and who still dances from time to time. His one fear is that his two sons will want to become dancers, a fear which may be realised, for even as infants they are showing signs of balletomania. Manuel really wanted to be a designer, and a few years ago he designed scenes in the revue *Pay the Piper*, and there is every likelihood that in the near future he will be designing again.

His duties as stage manager to the Royal Ballet at Covent Garden fall into two different parts—the first, when the company is playing on its home ground in the Royal Opera House, and the other when the company is on tour. At Covent Garden, each day produces a certain number of more or less routine jobs. First of all there are the reports of the previous night's performance to be gone through; cues may have been late, something may have gone wrong, scenery may need attention. The wardrobe is so efficient at Covent Garden that they usually deal with all dilapidation of costumes automatically.

The only contact

Then there are the conferences to be attended. All those to do with programme planning are attended by Manuel in an advisory capacity. Sometimes a proposed programme is impossible to realise as the needed scenery would use up too many lines, or the changes could not be effected quickly enough, or other similar obstacles may be in the way. Then it is up to him to point out the difficulties. The stage manager is the only real direct contact between the company and theatre management and the practical workings of the stage.

In addition to these conferences there are the curtain calls to be worked out with Dame Ninette de Valois—every call is carefully planned, so that there is never that unhappy spectacle of ballerinas and soloists not quite knowing who should appear to take a call. Any uncertainty of this kind immediately looks amateurish. The good stage manager can usually gauge the number of calls from the reaction of the house, though sometimes it becomes necessary to adopt little stratagems with an unresponsive audience in order to get the conductor from the orchestra pit to the stage at the end of a performance. The provoking of applause is an art in itself, with a whole repertoire of tricks, such as not producing a popular ballerina until the last moment in order to heighten the tension.

Often the routine of the day will be broken by rehearsals of new ballets or the revival of old ones. With regard to new ballets, it is the custom for a stage manager not to attend rehearsals until the work is complete. It is much better this way, because works have an invariable habit of being changed during their creation and if a stage manager saw them in this unfinished state he might receive entirely the wrong impression.

Stalwart support

A great deal of the day is spent in instructing the assistants and in this respect Manuel is lucky in his present two—Dennis Maunder and Leon Arnold. The former has had considerable previous experience, as he was for several years with International Ballet, later with the English Opera Group and has been at the Garden since 1953. Leon Arnold was, until 1954, a dancer with the company. Suffering an injury, he retired from dancing and became interested in the practical side of the theatre. He presents an interesting case because, having been a dancer himself, he understands the requirements of ballet from a dancer's point of view as well as having an appreciation for the other aesthetic aspects.

As the hour for the performance draws near, the calls have to go out to the dressing-rooms on the intercom system—the "half," the "quarter," "five minutes," "overture and beginners." The stage manager can talk to the artists in their dressing-rooms, and though they cannot answer back when they have received a signal, they can flash back and cause a red light to show on the board in the prompt-corner of the stage. Sometimes a dancer may be in trouble—a shoe-ribbon goes or a zip gets stuck—then it will be necessary to hold the curtain for a few moments. But according to Manuel, mishaps such as dancers not appearing when called very rarely happen at Covent Garden. There is no system of fines if dancers are late, but they are given a severe talking to from ballet master John Hart or, if the matter is very serious, from Dame Ninette.

The moment has arrived. The dancers cease their warming-up, the opening cue is checked. The stage manager stands stage-centre with his back to the vast curtain, making sure that everything is ready. He gives the signal for the house lights to be lowered, then signals the conductor in the orchestra pit. The music starts and the show is on.

Manuel rarely takes a show through himself after a ballet has become firmly established. He can leave it to Maunder and Arnold to take it through from the prompt-corner while he goes in front to see if everything is all right from the audience side.

The view from the prompt-corner or the wings can be very deceptive and it is not until seen from the front that anyone can be sure that all the planning of light cues or the position of scenery is exactly right. Oddly enough, this view from the side of the stage is one of the reasons why so many dancers are unreliable critics of a performance. What they see—peering as they have to between pieces of scenery and lighting equipment—may seem to them to amount to a wonderful performance. But somewhere between the dancers and the footlights something happens; what reaches the audience may appear to be rather second-rate. There is no doubt that projection is one of the most essential qualities in the art of the theatrical performer—also in the work of the stage manager.

Light and music

The light cues are given to the electricians concerned over the intercom from the prompt-corner and they are all taken from the music score. It is therefore essential for a stage manager in an opera house to be able to read a score. The relationship between music and light is very close, though it is a relationship that was never fully realised until the famous Swiss master of theatrical lighting, Adolphe Appia, expounded his theories of lighting Wagner operas towards the end of the last century.

When the company is on tour the show is taken through in much the same way, though there are naturally a number of other complications which arise. If the company is touring in England there is the question of transport of scenery and costumes. These tours have to be prepared well ahead and a list is sent to each theatre of the general requirements—the number of stage hands needed, lighting equipment and so on. This now has become merely a matter of routine in this country, because Michael Manuel and his staff know the British theatres well and so have a good picture of what is needed for each theatre.

Touring abroad presents many additional problems. First of all, prior to any overseas tour, there is the question of customs and excise. Before anything is packed, every item, however small, has to be checked over by a customs official, then packed and sealed. This results in weeks of boring and exhausting work. Then there is the planning so that unnecessary unpacking can be avoided. There may be one town where certain ballets are not to be given, so it would naturally be absurd

ZERO HOUR APPROACHES: Michael Manuel, in the foreground, with his two assistants Leon Arnold and Dennis Maunder on stage at Covent Garden shortly before an evening performance. The picture, showing the first-act setting of Sylvia, *is taken from the prompt-corner, where all the stage manager's work is done during an actual performance.* *Photo: Derek Allen*

for the whole repertoire to be unpacked in that place.

After everything has been transported, then arrangements have to be made to meet the scenery in each place and see that it is transported to the theatre. Sometimes when the company is on a series of one-night stands, as frequently happens in a long trans-American tour, the company and scenery arrive in a town only an hour or so before a performance. Then everything has to be planned rather on the lines of a military campaign. Sometimes the theatres are badly equipped, sometimes they are not really theatres at all but are vast auditoriums. It is on these occasions that intelligence of the highest order has to come into play.

Manuel has now trained himself to be able to size up a theatre within 10 minutes of entering it. He has got it to such a fine art that he now knows just what extra equipment is going to be needed and just what he can use of his own. Immediately the curtain is rung down on the final ballet the company has to get out of the theatre, on to the train *en route* for the next engagement. It is here that the previous careful planning shows results. As the curtain comes down on each work, or on an act of a full-length work, everything that is not going to be used later in the programme is packed up and on its way to the train long before the actual performance is finished. A week or two of this kind of thing can be, as you might imagine, extremely exhausting. The responsibility for it all is the stage manager's.

On these tours, Manuel has to be a day or so ahead of the company; therefore he has to rely on the efficiency of his assistants to take the actual performance through. This passes a great deal of responsibility to the assistants who, if they are not one hundred per cent "on the ball" can completely wreck a performance. Several thousand people are then disappointed and the Royal Ballet has to carry the stigma of inefficiency until they happen to come that way again, when, one hopes, things will be better. Fortunately this has not happened yet, but disaster would quickly follow if everyone was not completely expert at his job.

"And what," I enquired, "do you do when the curtain is finally rung down at Covent Garden at the end of any performance?" "Then," replied Michael Manuel, "we go home." Home, I should imagine, is not a place where any stage manager of a company continually playing can spend very much time. Perhaps some time when you are grumbling about some aspect of a Royal Ballet performance that may have not been as good as you felt it ought to have been, you will give a small thought to everything that a stage manager and his staff have to do.

Peter Williams

DANCE PIONEERS: Eminent American dancers, Ted Shawn (centre) and Martha Graham chat with Ben Sommers, President of Capezio, the famous ballet shoe manufacturers, at the luncheon given at the St. Regis Hotel, New York, for the presentation of Capezio's Annual Award. See "Shawn in Europe" paragraph, this page. *Photo: Radford Bascome*

curtain up!

Blame on all sides

THERE was blame on all sides in the dispute which led to the Royal Ballet's BBC Television production of *Petrushka* being cancelled. It was a pity that the BBC could not see its way to paying the dancers one and a half week's normal salary and that it wanted to enter into separate contracts with each of the dancers. But the BBC has little money for ballet and *Petrushka* calls for 90 dancers and 88 musicians. It was also a pity that nobody thought of all this before the dancers spent quite a long time on rehearsals while their exhausting Covent Garden season was still in progress. It was even more of a pity that certain members of the Royal Ballet thought fit to air their views on the whole dismal affair in the national Press.

It is also a pity that some of the Royal Ballet dancers cannot hear all the things that the general public and regular television viewers are saying about them. Their ears must have burned all the way on that long journey to New York and back which earned them a considerable sum of money for their *Cinderella* television appearance—for American audiences only. Perhaps somebody someday will remember that it is the British taxpayer who keeps the company going. An opportunity of showing the taxpayer in this country exactly what he is paying for was, therefore, sadly missed. Outside the small world of ballet, the art is actively disliked and that television *Petrushka* might well have earned ballet some more much-needed friends.

Royal Balletomane

FESTIVAL Ballet's triumphant season in Copenhagen has almost become a part of Danish ballet history. One of the company's most ardent supporters was none other than King Frederick. After the first night he rang up the box office in Tivoli to ask if there were any tickets for the following evening, adding, "I want to bring my wife and family." The box office found some tickets for him. "How much are they?" the King enquired, "I'll come round and pick them up." Which he did.

Somehow this could only happen in Denmark and it is typical of the love and enthusiasm which the Royal Danish family have for the arts and for ballet in particular. The King is a fine musician and frequently conducts the leading Danish orchestras.

Shawn in Europe

I WAS very glad to have the opportunity to meet Ted Shawn at a reception held in his honour at the English Speaking Union on April 17. He is one of the key figures in the pioneering of American modern dance. Over here on a very brief visit, he was travelling to Copenhagen a few days later. Shawn has always felt that all dance forms—ethnic, modern and ballet—were the proper territory for the dancer, and it was typical of the man that we should have talked as much about aboriginal dancing in Australia, as about his own Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, which he inaugurated 25 years ago.

Shawn is this year's winner of the annual Capezio Award for his work at Jacob's Pillow. These awards are given each year by the famous American ballet shoe manufacturers for an outstanding contribution to the progress of American dance.

The dancing Trojans

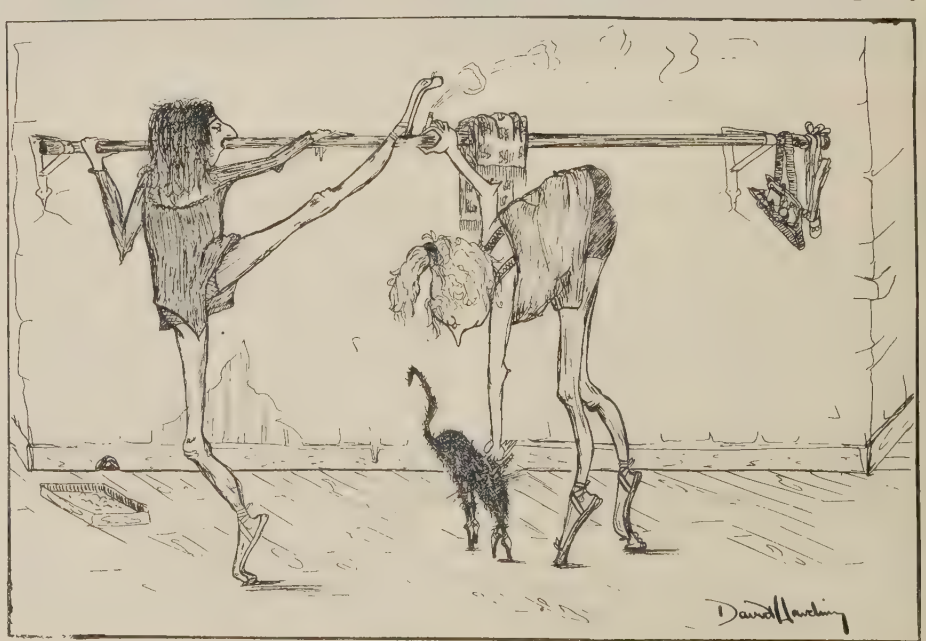
THE most talked-about future production at Covent Garden is not ballet. It is John Gielgud's production of Berlioz's monumental opera—*The Trojans*. Even so, there is to be some dancing in it and this is being choreographed by the Royal Ballet soloist, Meriel Evans. This important commission will not be her first essay in arranging the dances in opera, as recently she was responsible for the dances in the recent Covent Garden production of Wagner's *The Mastersingers*.

The daughter of a Ceylon planter, Meriel Evans is married to the Hon. Luke Asquith and is therefore the grand-daughter-in-law of Lord Asquith, the famous Liberal prime minister.

Ondine on ice

SO we are not going to see Frederick Ashton's long-promised *Ondine* until next year after all. Changes have to be made in Henze's score, and with the little time left before the Royal Ballet's next five-month American tour it was just not possible to mount this full-length ballet. Instead of a new work from Kenneth MacMillan which was rumoured, we are to be regaled with yet another of the works from the Theatre Ballet's repertoire. Readers will be glad to know that this ballet—MacMillan's *Solitaire*—will not be removed from the Theatre Ballet's repertoire as was Cranko's *The Lady and the Fool*. It will be given by both companies. Had the ballet been taken out of the younger company's repertoire, this would have deprived audiences of one of the wittiest performances by a British dancer in any existing British ballet, namely that by Margaret Hill in the principal rôle.

A DANCER'S DAY: 3 — *Warming up*



The transfer of ballets from Sadler's Wells to Covent Garden has, up to this moment, been remarkably unhappy. I hope that this new transfer will finally break the jinx which invariably attends these occasions.

Book bargains on the arts

ONE of the most interesting of recent books on ballet has been *Ballet in Moscow Today*, by Hélène Bellew, better known to lovers of the dance as the former de Basil ballerina, Hélène Kirsova. Last year Kirsova went to Moscow and her descriptions of the ballets, the dancers and the school of the Bolshoi Theatre have an added significance as coming from one who was herself a Russian-trained ballerina. The 165 photographs make an excellent record of the company which, last autumn, took Western Europe by storm.

I have made this handsome volume my first choice for the ballet section of the recently formed Seven Arts Book Club, a subsidiary of Hansom Books, publishers of DANCE AND DANCERS. For full details see pages 20 and 21 of this issue.

At the greatly reduced price at which this book is available to members, it is certainly an essential addition to any ballet library.

The Seven Arts Book Club also offers Cyril Beaumont's sumptuous *Ballet Design Past and Present*, at the incredibly low cost of 8*s*., a saving of 22*s*. on the published price.

Howard ballet revived

WHEN the Royal Ballet from the Sadler's Wells Theatre embarked on their Continental tour which took them to Spain, Switzerland, Germany and Holland, they added two distinguished revivals to their existing repertoire. One was a new production of *Les Sylphides*, produced by the Grigorievs on the same lines as the production at Covent Garden. The other was a revival of Andrée Howard's *Fête Etrange*. This latter work is not only one of Howard's best ballets, but is also one of the most sensitive works in the whole British repertoire. It is perhaps not always so popular with that section of the ballet public who only demand the obvious, but this should be no excuse for its being neglected. Another ballet which this company should keep in continual performance is Cranko's *Harlequin in April*, which marked an important development in his career and is as well a most intelligent and fascinating work.

BALLET WEDDING: Doreen Tempest (principal dancer of the Royal Ballet from Sadler's Wells) and Robert Lunnon after their wedding at St. Paul's Church, Covent Garden, on April 23.
Lunnon was also a member of the Royal Ballet from Sadler's Wells, but has been in Norway for the past two years forming the Den Norske Ballet. He will shortly take up a post in the United States.

Photo: John Baker

International quartet

IN the past few years, revivals of the famous *Pas de Quatre* have rather lost their point because the four famous ballerinas have not been played by dancers who have reached these heights. When Anton Dolin revives this ballet for the Nervi Festival at Genoa in July it should regain the excitement it once knew. As a culmination of a spectacle showing the development of the dance, given by 800 dancers, Alicia Markova (Taglioni), Yvette Chauviré (Grisi), Margrethe Schanne (Grahn) and Carla Fracci (Cerrito) will make a suitably international quartet in *Pas de Quatre*. After this, the four ballerinas will dance in modern works.

Come to Britain—in winter

A FEW weeks ago the usual sombre atmosphere which is usual at the Royal Opera House during the daytime, was broken. The theatre was full of bright lights and bustle. On the stage were the ballerinas and principal male dancers of the Royal Ballet in their glittering André Levasseur costumes for *Birthday Offering*. The reason for all this activity was that the British Travel Association was making a colour film of Ashton's ballet as part of a film intended to attract visitors to London in, of all times, the winter. The film—*Off Season*—will also have extracts from pantomime and other winter entertaiments. When this film is shown next year we shall be very interested to know just how many people will rush from abroad to see our pantomimes—that oddest and most obscure to the foreigner of all British institutions.

Change companies and dance

BY the time the Marquis de Cuevas' Grand Ballet reaches Edinburgh for this year's Festival, it will have Nathalie Krassovska, Daphne Dale and Nicholai Polajenko among its dancers. In addition there will be a new ballet by the young Greek choreographer Vassili Lambrinos, who created *Concerto (Grieg)* and *Laurel Crown* for London's Festival Ballet three years ago. If things continue at this rate the Cuevas company will very much resemble the Festival Ballet of yesterday.

happy birthday to...

		June
Doreen Wells	Royal Ballet	25
Celia Franca	Canadian National Ballet	25
Norman Dixon	Ballet Rambert	26
Nata Lee	Ballet Theatre	26
Christopher Newton	Royal Ballet	26
Brian Shaw	Royal Ballet	28
Valerie Taylor	Royal Ballet	30
		July
Leslie Caron		1
Audre Deckmann	Ballet Theatre	2
Simon Mottram	Royal Ballet	3
Beverly Simms	Ballet Theatre	4
John Hart	Royal Ballet	4
Leo Duggan	Ballet Theatre	5
Joyce Lyndon	Festival Ballet	7
Victor Duret	Royal Winnipeg Ballet	11
Hazel Coward	Festival Ballet	13
Fredda Maurice	Ballet Theatre	14
Brenda Bolton	Royal Ballet	14
Anita Landa	Festival Ballet	14
Joanne Nisbet	Festival Ballet	15
Patricia Wilde	New York City Ballet	16
Joan Cadzow	Dancing in Paris	17
April Olrich	*The Balcony*, Arts Theatre	17
Daphne Dale	De Cuevas Grand Ballet	18
Dorinda Brown	Royal Ballet	19
David Paltenghi	Filming	20
Anne Negus	Teaching in England	21
Angela Bayley	Teaching in Holland	22
Julia Farron	Royal Ballet	22
Jennifer Gay	Royal Ballet	22
Hermione Harvey	*Zuleika*	25

Dancer you will know

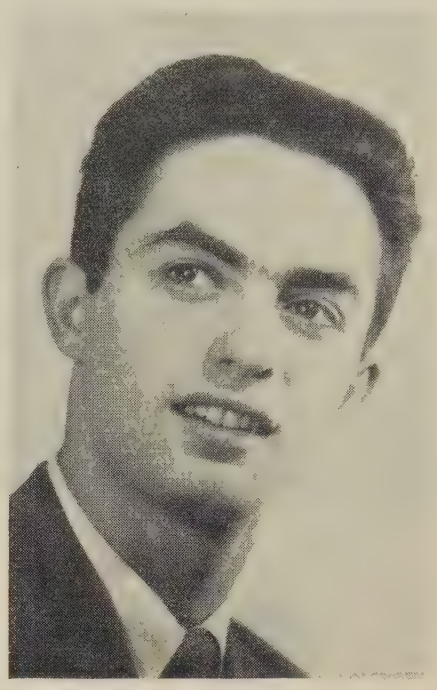


Photo: Bill McGee

BASIL THOMPSON

BORN in Newcastle-on-Tyne. He started to dance in 1949, *his first teacher being Nellie Potts. He left Miss Potts in November*, 1951, *to join the Royal Ballet School. After three years study he joined the Covent Garden Opera Ballet for a season and was transferred to the Royal Ballet at Covent Garden in July*, 1955.

Roles: Czardas *in* Swan Lake; *Ivan in* The Sleeping Beauty; *Stable Boy in* Petrushka; *Youth in* The Firebird; *Savage in* Mam'zelle Angot; *Pestilence in* Job; *Jeweller in* Cinderella; *Pirate in* Daphnis and Chloe; *Footman in* The Lady and the Fool.

THE other night the *Czardas* in *Swan Lake* nearly stopped the show. Remembering that at one time the character *divertissements* in *Swan Lake* were greeted by the audience with more stoicism than enthusiasm, it becomes obvious that the standard of character dancing in the Royal Ballet has improved more than somewhat.

This development has been more noticeable on the male than female side, and a very high standard is being set by the two principal character dancers, Grant and Powell, and the *demi-caractère* dancers, Shaw and Clegg. The younger members of the company are also showing terrific promise in the same direction, and none more than Basil Thompson.

The effortless ease of his high leaps in *Petrushka* has drawn most attention to him. But even before this his bearing in the *Swan Lake czardas*, and the vitality of his Ivan in *The Sleeping Beauty*, had clearly stamped him out as a dancer to watch. At a time when character dancing is beginning to play the same important rôle with the Royal Ballet that it already does with the Danes and Russians, there seems little doubt that his future should be a bright one.

STEPS OF THE DANCE 24

by
BARBARA VERNON and JOHN GREGORY

Illustrated by EILEAN PEARCEY

Illustration 42

(*a*) Temps lié *to the side.*

BARRE IN THE CENTRE

Group 1 (continued): *Temps Liés*

Temps Lié Forwards or Backwards en Croisé, Followed by Temps Lié to the Side with Inward Movement of the Arms: With *temps lié croisé* as previously described (finished fifth position, forward arm in fourth position, and arm corresponding to rear leg in third position), *plié* in fifth position gliding out front leg to the side, simultaneously bringing both arms forward to second position, as the weight is transferred to the working leg. The other leg follows after closing in fifth position front, as the arms continue opening to fourth position.

Temps Lié Lifting Working Leg to en l'Air Position) The first part of the *temps lié* is made as previously described, but instead of the following leg closing to the fifth position, it is lifted as a *battement* to the extended position. The leg is lifted simultaneously with the transference of weight. This step may be performed with a variety of positions, such as *temps lié* to *attitude*, *arabesque*, or *à la seconde*, etc.

The *temps lié* to a position *en l'air* may be executed with balance on the whole foot, or with *piqué* to the *demie-pointe*. It should first be practised on the whole foot, and when strength and balance have been acquired it may be ventured on the *demie-pointe*.

Temps Liés with Petit Développé to the Demies-Pointes: This is the most elegant form of *temps lié*, and calls for considerable poise. Standing in fifth position; arms in first position. With *plié* the working leg is picked up and extended with a small *développé* movement, and as it reaches full stretch, the supporting leg straightens and rises from the *plié* to the *demie-pointe*, the extended leg stepping very gently on to the *demie-pointe* with a transference of the weight, the supporting leg closing smoothly after it in fifth position on *demies-pointes*. The arms are as previously described; they must move in complete harmony with this gracious movement.

Temps Liés sur les Pointes: Will be dealt with in the *pointe*-work section.

Temps Liés to Demies-Pointes with Pas de Bourrée: In which the closing movement of the *temps lié* becomes the beginning of a *pas de bourrée*, viz: as the leg closes in fifth position on *demie-pointe*, the other leg steps to the side on *demie-pointe*, and the following leg closes in fifth or fourth position *en plié*.

Temps Liés to the Demies-Pointes with Soutenu en Tournant en Dehors: The *soutenu en dehors* is a particularly effective turning movement following after *temps lié* to the *demies-pointes*. Without a preparatory *plié*, the turn becomes a smooth continuation of the *temps lié*.

After *temps lié en croisé* to *demies-pointes*, feet in fifth position; forward arm in fourth position, rear arm in third position, the body turns three-quarter turn towards the rear leg which in the course of the turn becomes the front leg. The *soutenu* finishes with a soft *plié*, the arms changing, third position arm to fourth; and fourth position arm to third; or they may be lowered outward to first position. When *soutenu en tournant en dehors* is executed from the *effacé* position, the same procedure is followed. In both cases care must be taken in finishing to pull back the toe of the front leg in a neat fifth position.

Temps Liés with Soutenu en Tournant en Dedans: *Temps lié* may be followed by *soutenu en dedans* but although it is possible for the *soutenu* to follow as a continuous transition of the *temps lié*, it will be more pleasing to *plié* before embarking upon the *soutenu* turn.

In all *soutenus en tournant* the head used as in *pirouettes* will facilitate the flow and ease of the turn.

(For illustrations of *soutenu en tournant* see Barre-Work Article No. 7.)

Temps Liés to the Demies-Pointes Followed by Passé: In which the *temps lié* to *demies-pointes* is immediately followed by the picking up of the front or back leg, to the knee and lowering it beside the calf to the alternative fifth position. In *enchaînement* this is an effective means of changing quickly the position, with appropriate adjustment of arms, head and torso, from *effacé* to *croisé*, etc.

NOTE: Other steps that may be successfully combined with the *temps liés enchaînement* include *glissade*, *pas de basque*, *failli*, etc. The variations are limitless.

Examples of Enchaînements Incorporating Temps Liés sur les Demies-Pointes.

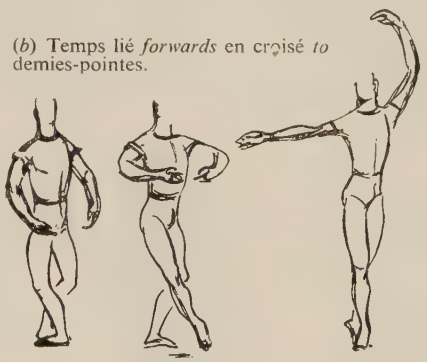
Commencing with the right leg in front:

(*a*) 1 *battement tendu* side right leg, close behind. Counts and 1,
1 *battement tendu* side left leg, close behind. Counts and 2,
Temps lié croisé forward *en attitude*. Counts and 3, and 4.
Pas de bourrée under to fourth position *effacé*. Counts and 1, and 2,
Soutenu en dedans. Counts and 3, and 4.
1 *petit changement*. Counts and 1,
Pirouette en dehors from fifth position. Counts and 2,
Finish fifth position right leg behind *plié* and straighten. Counts and 3, and 4.
Repeat to the left.

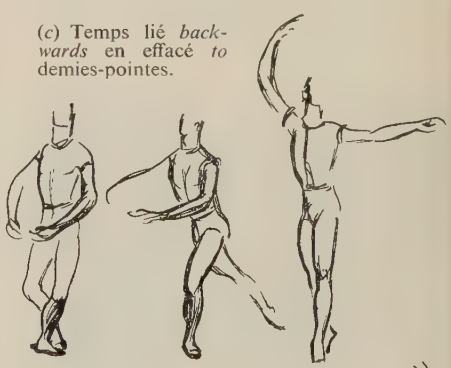
(*b*) 3 *battements tendus*, front, side, behind. Counts and 1, and 2, and 3.
Temps lié back, *en croisé*. Counts and 1, and 2,
Tombé forward *en effacé*. Counts and 3,
Piqué pirouette en dehors. Counts and 4.
Close fifth position left leg behind. Counts and 5,
Sisol fermé to the side, close fifth position left leg in front. Counts and 6.
Repeat to the left.

continued on page 27

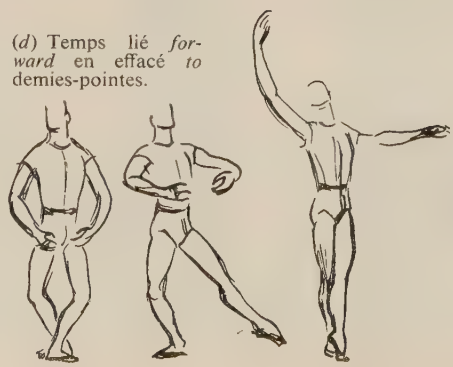
(*b*) Temps lié *forwards* en croisé *to* demies-pointes.



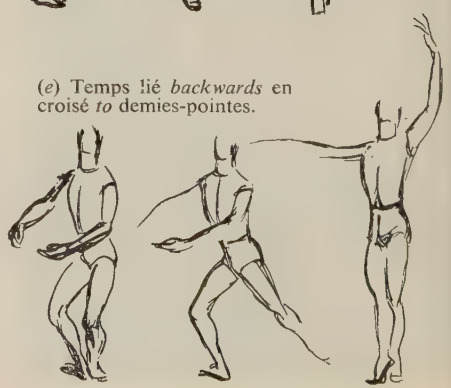
(*c*) Temps lié *backwards* en effacé *to* demies-pointes.



(*d*) Temps lié *forward* en effacé *to* demies-pointes.



(*e*) Temps lié *backwards* en croisé *to* demies-pointes.



HEAVENLY TWINS: Anya Linden (Spirit of Gemini) and David Blair (Spirit of Sagittarius) in Gemini Waltz *from Constant Lambert's* Horoscope, *for which Peter Darrell did some new choreography for BBC television.*

CHILD'S STRANGE DREAM: Noel Rossana (the Cabaret Artist Puppet), Anya Linden (the Young Girl who Dreams) and Peter Clegg (the Matelot Puppet) in Peter Wright's The Nursery *to Inghelbrecht's suite of the same name. Another ballet from the BBC* Divertissement *programme. Photo: BBC*

Triple Bill

DIVERTISSEMENT

Three new ballets given on BBC Television on April 7. Choreographers: Peter Wright and Peter Darrell. Designer: Guy Sheppard. Produced by Margaret Dale.

ANYA LINDEN	MERLE PARK
NOEL ROSSANA	DAVID BLAIR
PETER CLEGG	KEITH MILLAND

ALTHOUGH none of the short ballets in this programme could be said to indicate that a new first-rate choreographer had emerged, the cumulative effect was encouraging rather than disappointing. One was good, another promising, and one, in my opinion, frankly banal.

The first work, Peter Wright's *The Nursery*, to music by Inghelbrecht, may have been ideal for children's television, and it was certainly better than the dull average of dances seen in variety programmes, but it would be considered poor by Ballet Workshop standards, and, for the presumably adult audiences which this programme caters for, highly inadequate as entertainment. The opening lines of the narration, "Anya had the *strangest* dream . . ." did rather prejudice me against it.

Considered in itself, Wright's choreography was of no special interest, but he may have made it deliberately simple so that dancers working in a foreign medium would not be too handicapped. But the idea of the ballet—the child dreaming that her toys were coming to life in the nursery—seemed a little commonplace. Linden's personality seems almost too fragile for the close scrutiny of the television camera. If a choreographer has no particular idea in mind, he would be wiser not to scatter obstacles in his own path by using a plot which cannot give him any inspiration. Better then to stick to an abstract theme, but perhaps the BBC said: "We can't have three abstract works in the one programme. The viewers do like some sort of story."

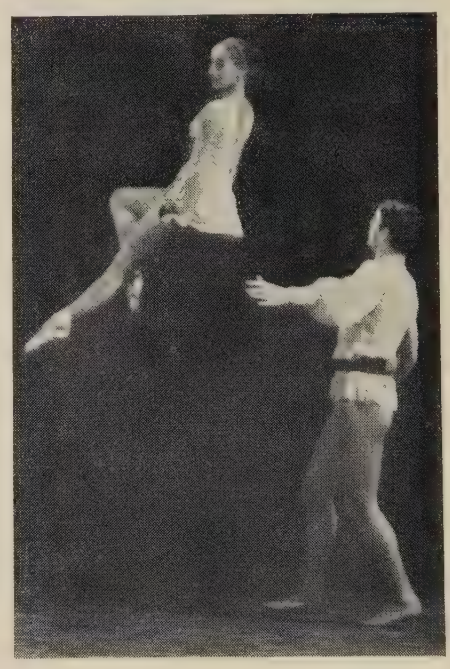
TELEVISION
Reviewed by E. C. MASON

Peter Darrell's *Horoscope Gemini Waltz* to Lambert's music was the best work. This abstract but modest ballet seemed to reveal an understanding of the special advantages which television can bring to ballet. It certainly revealed a maturity and an extraordinarily sensitive use of music. Its main feature was a fairly long and inventive *pas de deux* for Anya Linden and David Blair in which the movements rose upon the music. Both dancers were in exceptionally good form, Blair being outstanding. The special effects which television can provide improved the ballet—Linden became the Twins by the use of a mirror, while dancers almost concealed in the background to support lifts gave one the illusion that she was floating through space.

In Wright's other ballet, *Soirées Musicales*, to Britten's arrangement of Rossini, he used the theme of parlour games, but high spirits were somewhat forced, and the dancers failed to convince viewers that they were really enjoying it. The opening March seemed to contain more padding than choreography, but the musical-chairs idea for the Tarantella was most effective. Wright seems, however, to have allowed his concentration on the movements to run away with him and he has yet to acquire a personal style of choreography. One was, inevitably, continually falling back into comparing this ballet with Tudor's; such are the perils of using music which has already been used for a successful ballet.

VIEWERS who have been so cunning as to discover when the BBC transmits its colour TV experiments, which can be obtained on any set (though, of course, in black and white), must have been pleasantly surprised to find Norman Dixon and Patricia Dyer, of Ballet-Rambert, dancing excerpts from *Simple Symphony*, *Gala Performance* and *Casse-Noisette* one Friday night at 11.30. Those who keep on telling us that ballet will only come into its own on TV when we have colour may possibly be right, because we have heard that the results of this performance were quite excellent. *More Television on page 29*

FLOATING EFFECT: Another moment from Gemini Waltz, *in which Anya Linden appears to be floating in the air away from David Blair. Photo: Dominic*



STEPS OF THE DANCE

continued from opposite page

(*c*) *Pas de basque* back with left leg. Counts and 1,
Pirouette en dehors, close right leg fifth position behind. Counts and 2,
Battement tendu croisé front with left leg. Counts and 3,
Battement tendu croisé back with right leg. Counts and 4,
Temps lié forward *en croisé*. Counts and 1, and 2,
Temps lié backwards *en effacé*. Counts and 3, and 4.
Repeat to the right.

So You Want to Dance?

Schools and Teachers
by E. C. MASON

Nesta Brooking's studio

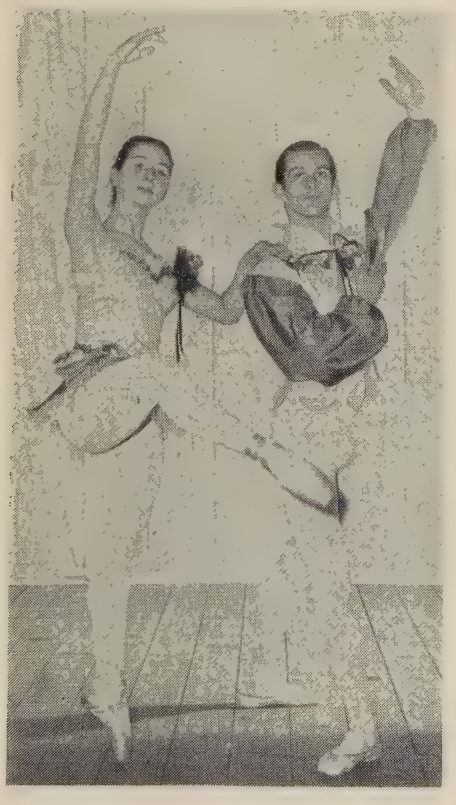
IT was a warm Friday afternoon in a large church hall situated in one of the most delightful parts of London near Regent's Park. This was Nesta Brooking's studio. We sat, she and I, talking about present-day prospects for dancers. The pianist was playing *Giselle*, and Michael Holmes was finishing his repertoire class; the advanced students had been studying the rôle of the Queen of the Wilis.

Nesta Brooking's sincerity and honesty had already put me at ease and it was interesting to hear her views, and to hear her discuss particular problems of ballet training today. Because her primary object is to produce dancers for the stage and teachers of real understanding, she realised that they could best be produced from a preliminary training in a junior school.

For this reason she established her own day and boarding school, where education to G.C.E. standard is given its full importance, parallel with sound early training in ballet. Here schooldays are followed by intensive instruction in ballet with additional specialised teachers. There is, as well, a special emphasis on art, music and drama, and a few students are also accepted by the school for preliminary training in these subjects prior to enrolment in the recognised academies.

The whole hall was alive with excitement. Girls in peasant skirts were practising character steps. We were waiting for her guest teacher, Maria Fay, to arrive and take a character class. When she appeared the effect was little less than electrical. She was, until last October, ballet mistress to the Budapest State Theatre Company and School, and artistic director and choreographer of the Tavasz Company. Until recently Michael Holmes had taken the character classes, but on seeing her demonstrate he was so impressed that he immediately handed his class over to her, and now attends it himself as a pupil.

STAR PUPILS: Susan Salomon, one of today's most promising young dancers and twice winner of the coveted Mabel Ryan Award annually given by the Cecchetti Society, dancing with Mario de Marigny. He has been a dancer with Ballet Rambert for some time
Photo: Paul Wilson



Maria Fay's enthusiasm is bound to excite and stimulate pupils and already, by breaking down the English reserve which our dancers normally exhibit in character dances, she has achieved remarkable results. Her personality is dynamic and completely vivacious without being all froth. Although she does not speak English perfectly, one subtle move of her body conveys a new step in an instant. As she told me herself, her method is "near to ballet" and, therefore, classically trained dancers can pick it up reasonably quickly.

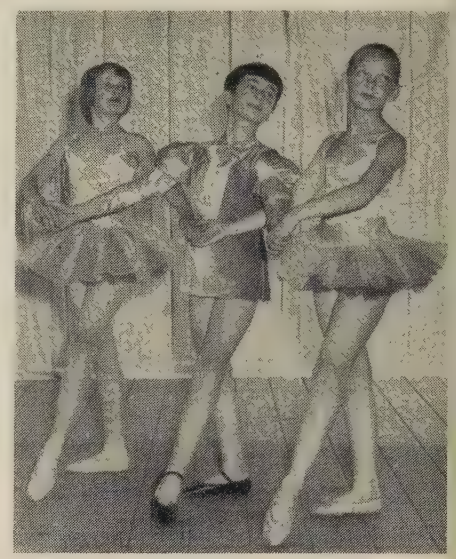
The *barre* is based on the orthodox *barre*—the *petits battements*, *tendus*, *fondus*, *ronds de jambe*, *grands battements*, and so on, are all used, but with special character "accents." The preparatory *port de bras* indicates the timing and mood of each exercise. Genuine Hungarian music is used—not of the café music variety—giving musical authority to her classes. She can employ a gentle sarcasm if pupils want, say, to start a step before she has finished giving instructions. "Please," she cries, "do not show *me* zees step. I know it." Or, "You can't understand me if I spik English, but if I talk Hungarian you know what I mean?"

But I must return to the subject of this article. Nesta Brooking is an adjudicator and a committee member of the Cecchetti Society, and her classes have a strong Cecchetti base. She is what may be termed a second generation Cecchetti teacher, not having studied with the Maestro himself, but with his pupil, Margaret Craske. She is also one of the few teachers in this country who gives regular and special classes in dance composition.

Dance composition classes

"Much trite novelty these days passes as choreography. A young choreographer may have to go through such growing-pains," she says, "but if there is a basically sound training where substance of idea is sought and carried out with some quality, these experiments will be used with discrimination and not as the be-all and end-all of choreography." The results of these classes have been extremely interesting and of quality, avoiding the banal. Some of the students' work in this field is seen every year at the choreographic competitions instituted by Cyril Beaumont. In these dance composition classes Nesta Brooking prefers quiet suggestions to corrections, because a mistimed correction may disturb the sensitive student to such a degree that the source of inspiration dries up. Moreover, she will not insist that a pupil makes use of particular steps or movements.

The art tuition in the school has been responsible for some sound designing, and any student talented in this capacity gets the chance to carry out stage design for the studio performances. Students also derive great benefit from the compulsory drama classes, where Beryl Goddard's training is on a professional basis. The success of her methods in teaching stagecraft and stage management are always apparent in the presentation of their drama performances.



YOUNG ENTRY: Three of the younger dancers of Nesta Brooking's Studio. Ann Whitley, Nicholas Chagrin (son of the conductor who has worked with many foreign ballet companies in England) and Françoise Willmott. Photo: Paul Wilson

Among other special classes are those taken by George Erskine Jones in modern dance. *Pas de deux* is taken by Harry Haythorne, as David Poole, whose teaching in this field has been so much appreciated, is now going abroad. In addition to teaching senior students the classical ballets, Michael Holmes incorporates talks on the history of ballet in his repertoire classes.

A dancer for Gore

Betty Anderton, the first winner of the Beaumont Scholarship to the Royal Ballet School, was a student here. I had noticed her previously, dancing in *Eugene Onegin* in the Opera Ballet at Sadler's Wells, and now she is in the company. It is also interesting to note that Walter Gore has just chosen a student from this school for his company in Frankfurt.

To sum up, apart from Nesta Brooking's own brand of concentrated sincerity, here are the special advantages offered by her studio, in addition to classical ballet training. A general educational school, where training is focused on the arts, combined with a boarding school; compulsory classes in mime and drama; dance composition classes; and special classes in character, modern, *pas de deux* and repertoire. The studio is at St. Mary's Hall, Primrose Hill, N.W.3; open professional classes are held each morning at 11, and the times of special classes may be had on application.

"In any school," says Nesta Brooking, "the student must find an atmosphere in which all that is best in her or him is encouraged, and where he or she will be given every opportunity for self-expression but also learn strong self-discipline, in order to become adaptable and reliable in professional life, and, indeed, in life generally. Students must not only be trained, they must be developed."

I think the value of this school may be best expressed by saying that if a child has any artistic ability whatsoever, Nesta Brooking is most likely to find out in which field this strength lies, and to develop it towards its own best fullfiment.

Unflattering Portrait

Petrassi: *The Portrait of Don Quixote* (*Il Ritratto di Don Chisciotte*)—Suite. Malipiero: Symphony No. 6. Orchestra Alessandro Scarlatti (Franco Caracciolo). Columbia 33CX1414. 12in. 39*s*. 7½d.

AUREL MILOSS'S *The Portrait of Don Quixote* was first produced in Paris by the Ballets des Champs-Élysées on November 2, 1947, with Babilée in the title rôle and Philippart as Dulcinea. The ballet did not remain long in the repertoire and, from all accounts, was chiefly memorable for Babilée's convincing characterisation and Keogh's fine décor and costumes.

NEW RECORDS
Reviewed by DAVID HUNT

The music, by the prominent Italian composer Goffredo Petrassi, is cast in a neo-classic idiom showing considerable Stravinskyan influence. It would seem that Petrassi was attracted not by the colourful romantic possibilities of the subject, as had been Richard Strauss and, on a lower level of inspiration, Minkus, but as ideal scope for depicting in music the disordered workings of a deranged mind. The interplay and conflict of ideas, obsessions and emotions are skilfully delineated in writing which, though highly atmospheric, preserves throughout an almost clinical, scientific detachment. The score is no less interesting for being more in the nature of musical psycho-analysis than a "portrait," even if from a theatrical point of view the composer makes the great mistake of inviting an audience to witness the mental breakdown of the protagonist without having first enlisted sympathy for him. Adolphe Adam—and Cervantes—knew better.

The concert suite, which consists of the entire score less two short interludes, is given a precise and persuasive performance by the Italian orchestra, and an informative sleeve-note helpfully describes each movement in terms of the corresponding stage action.

Malipiero's austerely beautiful if somewhat characterless Sixth Symphony, scored for string orchestra, fills the reverse and will be found rewarding or boring according to individual taste. The recording is excellent on both sides.

Fantasy and ferocity

Rimsky-Korsakov: *Le Coq d'Or*—Suite. Borodon: *Prince Igor*—Polovtsian Dances. London Symphony Orchestra and Chorus (Antal Dorati). Mercury MRL2537. 12in. 39*s*. 7½*d*.

ANTAL DORATI is an old hand at both these scores—as musical director before the war of Col. de Basil's Ballet Russe he must have conducted hundreds of performances of Fokine's *Le Coq d'Or* and *Prince Igor*, each of which used substantially the same music as in these suites.

Happily, Dorati's interpretations have lost nothing of the verve and vitality that were always his most notable characteristics as a ballet conductor. The *Prince Igor* dances are thrillingly brought off—by a stretch of the imagination one could say that Shabelevsky as the Polovtsi Chief sets the exciting pace for the final dance. At the beginning the chorus, singing in English, sound a little incongruously genteel; but they make a more suitably abandoned contribution to the performance as it proceeds.

The playing time for this side is just under 12 minutes. Might it not have been an excellent idea to have also included the *Polovtsi March*, which is sometimes played as an overture to the ballet, and the lovely song for soprano and chorus *Now the daylight dies*, that was incorporated in the de Basil production?

Apart from some abbreviation and the omission of the Queen of Shemâkhan's *Hymn to the Sun*, the concert suite from *Le Coq d'Or* includes all the music from the opera that Fokine used in his ballet.

Dorati, as ever, makes the utmost of Rimsky-Korsakov's vibrant orchestral colouring; and if in the more subdued sections he does not quite achieve the suggestion of menace and mystery which Issay Dobrowen brought out in his recording, many will prefer the new performance for its greater rhythmic drive and vitality, and for its more vivid reproduction.

Both recordings were made during Dorati's visit to this country last summer, in Walthamstow Town Hall, noted for its clear acoustics. Mercury's famed "Living Presence" single microphone technique has resulted in outstandingly brilliant reproduction throughout both works. In fact, some listeners may even find the sound a little too brilliant for comfort, in which case a generous treble cut should do the trick.

JEAN BABILEE in the title-rôle of Aurel Miloss's The Portrait of Don Quixote *for Les Ballets des Champs-Elysées. A recording of a suite from Petrassi's music is reviewed this month.*

TELEVISION
Continued from page 27

Cinderella in Britain

Excerpts from the Royal Ballet production given on BBC Children's Television on April 16. Choreography by Frederick Ashton. Arranged by Peggy van Praagh. Music: Prokofiev. Designer: Edwin Florence. Produced by Naomi Capon.

ANYA LINDEN DAVID BLAIR

I ALMOST spilt the coffee I was balancing when the announcer said: "Well, I'm sure the boys enjoyed that programme on cricket. Now here's something for the girls—a visit to the ballet." After all the spadework done by Harold Turner, Peggy van Praagh and Felicity Gray stressing that ballet was as much a masculine entertainment and profession as a feminine one, how could the BBC permit such a ridiculous statement to be broadcast?

The programme of excerpts was intelligently arranged by Peggy van Praagh, who also gave younger viewers a long and interesting preliminary talk on the ballet itself. Edwin Florence's sets were decorative and discreet, the presentation was in good taste and, for once, it did not appear that expenditure had been severely limited for a children's programme. The camera direction must be termed straightforward and conventional, rather than imaginative or inspired, but the programme was none the worse for this because the dancing was of such a high standard. There was certainly no need to obscure the dancing or carry the artists with trick effects and trick shots.

David Blair must be one of the few dancers who can be his stage best on television. Anya Linden also danced extremely well, but in close-ups her facial expression tends to appear rather vacant. To give variety and continuity and allow costumes to be changed without interrupting the plot, two film inserts were ingeniously added. Lengthened slightly and made a little more substantial, the programme would be ideal entertainment for adult television audiences.

E. C. Mason

Fall River Legend in America

IN the second-last "Omnibus" programme of this season, choreographer Agnes de Mille and Massachusetts attorney Joseph N. Welch combined to present their interpretations of the Lizzie Borden murder case. During the first two-thirds of this hour and a half programme, a company of actors appeared in Joseph Hurley's original drama, *The Trial of Lizzie Borden*, and this included the actual testimony of the trial.

Agnes de Mille gave a spoken commentary to introduce her ballet *Fall River Legend* and her voice was also heard during the first section of this work when she set the scene and characters. As she explained it, "the ballet deals with Lizzie Borden's interior emotion" and, in consequence, viewers were given quite a different approach to what they had first seen portrayed in the dialogue. As a matter of fact, the dance section of this programme was the high point.

If memory serves correctly, this work was cut 10 or 15 minutes to fit into the time allotted to it. In its translation to this medium what seemed missing was the form of the original ballet, and what remained seemed to place a greater emphasis on the personalities. Nora Kaye, as always, was superb, and Lucia Chase came across magnificently in her portrayal of the step-mother. Also contributing markedly to the success of this work were John Kriza, Diana Adams, Dimitri Romanoff and Ruth Ann Koesun, all in their original rôles. Unfortunately, only Kaye was given credit by name at the end of the performance. Morton Gould conducted the 28-piece orchestra which played his original score for this work.

While those familiar with *Fall River Legend* and de Mille's choreography may quarrel with the fact that this work was cut and lost some of its original dimension in the transference to the medium of television, it must be admitted that the combination of the actual trial and de Mille's and Welch's commentary provided a wonderful means of introducing a television audience, estimated around several millions, to serious dance.

Arthur Todd

Modern Dance Work Reproduced by Labanotation

There has been a good deal written in DANCE AND DANCERS about the various methods of dance notation. A recent reconstruction by Ann Hutchinson of Doris Humphrey's *The Shakers* by Labanotation proved how effective this method of notating can be.

by CLIVE BARNES

THE CREATOR

DORIS HUMPHREY is among the leaders of the modern dance. In America she is regarded as one of their most significant choreographers, and her work is accorded as much respect as that given to Martha Graham. Up to now her reputation in England has rested solely on hearsay, but thanks to the enterprise of the British Dance Notation Society, an early dance-work of hers, *The Shakers*, has been seen by an English audience. This performance, which took place at the Sigurd Leeder Studio on April 18, also made history by being the first occasion in this country that a complete dance-work was produced entirely by the use of Labanotation.

Humphrey was born in Oak Park, Illinois, and it was in Chicago, at eight, that she first started to dance. Her first lessons were chiefly ballroom and folk dancing, but her teacher encouraged her to study other dance forms, including classical ballet. Soon she came under the influence of the founders of American modern dance, Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn, and in 1917 went to Los Angeles to teach at the Denishawn School. She soon became a member of the Denishawn company, remaining with the group until 1928, when, together with Charles Weidman, another Denishawn dancer, she left to form a new school and company.

Until Humphrey's retirement as a dancer in 1945, the Humphrey-Weidman group was, together with Martha Graham's company, probably the dominating force in American modern dance. In recent years, apart from teaching, Humphrey has concentrated on choreography, principally for José Limón's company. When later this year Limón's group tours Europe, and it is hoped England, we will have an opportunity of seeing her work in ideal circumstances.

THE WORK

THE SHAKERS was originally produced in 1931, under the title of *Dance of the Chosen*. Later the same year it appeared, together with a couple of other Humphrey-Weidman pieces, in the revue, *Americana*, and has since established itself as a modern dance classic. In 1948 when Humphrey was rehearsing it for the repertory class of her school, the dance was taken down in Labanotation. It has since been reproduced elsewhere, notably at the University of California and at Interlaken, both in 1955, and now for this London première.

The inspiration for *The Shakers* came from the activities of a Quaker religious sect founded in Albany by English colonists before the revolution. Known originally as the Shaking Quakers, they believed that shaking would get rid of their sins, much as a wet dog shakes himself free of water. In the beginning their meetings were private, but over the years a shaking ritual developed, which outsiders were permitted to watch, and by which the Quakers hoped to secure conversions to their cult. Their services were held in pewless meeting-houses, with just a bench along one side of the rectangular building for intruders from the outside world. The Shakers entered the building, men on one side, women on the other. Individually at first, they started their religious contortions. Soon they were all jumping, shaking and whirling, crying out their exhortations to the Lord. A leader called upon them to repent their sins and they threw themselves on the ground, shouting out in a frenzy of confession.

SHAKERS IN ECSTASY: Students and dancers from various ballet companies and musical shows combine in a performance of The Shakers. *These dancers were attending a Modern Dance Course, organised by the British Notation Society at the Sigurd Leeder School. The culmination of the course was to show this Doris Humphrey work to an invited audience. Photo: Paul Wilson*

Religious ecstasy, as we have just been reminded by William Sargant's book *Battle for the Mind*, is never very pretty, and *The Shakers* is perhaps not a spectacle for the over-squeamish. Lasting only twelve minutes it is a group dance of almost unpleasant intensity. It was appropriate that it was produced during a month in which the London theatre was painstakingly engaged in a minute examination of almost every pathological condition of the human mind.

Miss Humphrey's dance style is obviously powerful and apparently individual. It was evolved by her soon after she left Denishawn. She reached it, so the story goes, by studying her own muscular reactions in a mirror. She noticed that there were two types of immobility, that of perfect balance, and that of total collapse, when the body has yielded completely to the force of gravity. She conceived motion as being "an arc between two deaths," the "death" of balance and the "death" of collapse.

By swaying from side to side she noted that any movement upset the equilibrium, and was instinctively compensated for by a reflex action body-pull in the opposite direction, as the body automatically regains its balance. As the sways increased in range until they became incipient falls, the body motion increased in speed and, obviously, the compensatory adjustment had to be more powerful. The point was reached when the compensatory movements failed and the body fell to the "death" of total collapse. Humphrey conceived that the most interesting, and potentially most dramatic, movements were those where the "recovery" only just defeated the "fall": movements that were, in her sense, "death-defying." So her dance-style was made into a rhythmic alternation of fall and recovery, positions of balance and unbalance providing the markers for the area of muscular effort.

We English are far more frivolous than our American cousins, so if Miss Humphrey's theories sound so much eye-wash to you, forget them! What is important is that here is a style of dancing, completely different from that favoured by the R.A.D., which, judging from *The Shakers*, works.

The choreography of *The Shakers* has to an extent been derived from accounts of genuine Shaker rituals. It opens quietly, proceeds into a frenzy of quivering movement, with jumps and half-falls, and ends on a stealthily unhealthy note of religious exaltation. Unlike Graham, it appears that the floor-patterns are of great importance in Humphrey's work. The parallel lines of the worshippers disintegrate during the course of the work, and are resolved in the finale into a circular pattern.

The musical background is provided by drum and accordion; at times the dancers themselves, as if seized by the Holy Spirit, shout out with revivalist fervour declarations of their faith.

Conditions for this ambitious revival were far from ideal. The dancers participating were drawn from those attending a special Modern Dance Course organised by the British Dance Notation Society at the Sigurd Leeder School. Some of the dancers were professionals with a high technical standard, like Robert Harvey and Harry Haythorne; others were merely students.

The work, which was reconstructed by Ann Hutchinson, had to be compressed into the space available in the Leeder studio, a cramping that was made the more serious by an increase in the cast, as Miss Hutchinson wanted everyone on the course to be able to take part in the performance. Rehearsal time was strictly limited. Yet for the performance it was not necessary to make any apologies. Even in practice dress, on a studio floor, and with inexperienced dancers, *The Shakers* emerged as a superb theatre piece.

JARON YALTAN demonstrates Jayasty, dance with an Indian basis and a European outlook.

FEELING THE ORIENT: Yaltan (third from right) with some of his pupils in an Indian olk-dance, which is a form of Indian dancing which Europeans take to most easily.
Photos: Porchester Portraits

East meets West in Jayasty

The new style of dance, Jayasty, created by Jaron Yaltan, brings the schools of Indian dance and Modern European dance together.

TWO great continents, Asia and Europe, have produced two entirely different approaches to life in general and to the arts in particular. Both can admire and appreciate the arts of the other, but can they practise them—or is there any point if they do? We know of course that a number of dancers and choreographers have been greatly influenced by the schools of Indian dancing—Pavlova was deeply interested and included a number of Hindu dances in her programmes. Fokine must have been influenced to a certain extent and so has Martha Graham. But on the whole the picture conjured up of a Hindu *Swan Lake* or of Kensington ladies swaying as Tanjore temple dancers in Bharata Natyam is not an entirely happy one. But whereas the Western classical dance vocabulary would possibly be of little use to an Indian dancer, there is much in the four schools of Indian dancing that can be of the greatest benefit to the European dancer.

This is where Jayasty (JAron YAltan STYle) comes in. It is an attempt, exactly how successful only time will show, to mix the dance of India and of Europe.

Its creator, Jaron Yaltan, was born in Ahmedabad in South India. In the next compound lived the family of Mrinalini Sarabhai, the two houses being connected by ancient underground wells in which the wives of the old Emperors used to bath. Singing and dancing were the order of the day—and night—with the two families, until in 1933 Jaron Yaltan's grandfather was knighted. After that the family had to sober up.

From an early age Jaron Yaltan was interested in the dance and the theatre, but two Modern European dancers, Marcia and René Gunsett, who toured India, had the greatest influence on him. The dance of his country was inherent in him, but these Europeans opened up a new horizon, the existence of which he had, until then, been unaware. He tried all kinds of experiments, such as dancing rumbas and tangos to Indian music, and these youthful attempts led him to believe that some kind of fusion might be possible. He had in the meantime been learning Kathak (the dance of North India) and Kathakali (the dance drama of South India) with his first teacher, Sunalini Devi, the sister of the great Indian poet.

Yaltan was considered to be too tall for a dancer and this, together with the fact that his family's position was such that to have a son as a professional dancer was not smiled upon, made it difficult for him to accept engagements in the theatre. He did, however, dance quite a lot in outlying villages and he organised and danced in charity performances for war relief.

In the years of his youth he had developed a great love of England and his greatest ambition was to come to London to study and to get to know the European way of life at first hand. The opportunity he so desired came in 1947. On his arrival in London he met Ram Gopal and joined his company. For several years he was a member of Ram Gopal's company and he gained an enormous amount of experience, not only of the dance but of the theatre in general and the complications of touring. In between engagements he appeared as an actor in films and plays: *Bwani Junction*, *The Little Hut* and *Indian Summer* (a play with Betty Ann Davis) among others. He arranged the dances for Prudence Hyman in a production of Wilde's *Salome* and for Lana Morris in *Don't Lose Your Head.* He has also written two plays.

In all the time he has been in England, Jaron Yaltan has found that there is a great interest in Indian dance both from professional dancers and from those who take up dancing more as a form of exercise. A certain section though has been horrified at the idea of mixing the schools of Europe and India, the reason being that so many so-called Indian dances in musicals and in cabaret have been exceedingly vulgar. Yaltan could see no reason why such a combination should be vulgar and he continued to develop the ideas which he started to formulate in his early days in India.

The person who inspired him most and who gave him the greatest encouragement was Martha Graham, when she gave her first London season at the Saville Theatre. He went to see her performance night after night and he ultimately came to the conclusion that she is the greatest exponent of the dance. He met her on several occasions and she suggested that he should go to New York. He did not go to New York but opened a school in London, but it was she who gave him the idea. He feels that she, with her mystic, almost Oriental approach to dance, has achieved magnificently what he is attempting to do.

He opened his school in Lexham Gardens early this year and as well as Indian (traditional and folk) and European (Modern and specialised) he teaches his own style, Jayasty. In this way he hopes to bring certain aspects of Indian dancing to the people who want to learn about it and also to bring understanding to European audiences. He aims at an Oriental aspect without vulgarity which will not make Europeans or Indians laugh and throw up their hands in horror—something which both continents will respect. Already, in a very short space of time, he has achieved a great deal.

The first step is to instil in Europeans an understanding and sense of Indian music and rhythms. The folk and Manipuri dances come easiest to the Occidental for a start. Folk dances give a sense of rhythm and simple Manipuri brings out the lyrical side. After that, the pupils can choose which of the other three schools—Bharata Natyam, Kathak or Kathakali—they wish to take up. Possibly Kathakali is the most interesting to dancers who wish to take up any branch of theatre art, as it lends itself better to self-expression and develops a remarkable insight into the art of mime and acting.

Each pupil is taught individually and, in addition to the general classes, there are private classes. Jaron Yaltan also arranges dances for soloists or groups.

Just how profound an effect Jayasty will have on European dancing remains to be seen, but whatever the result, it will bring about a greater understanding of the ancient dance art of India. **P.W.**

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THE ROYAL BALLET AT COVENT GARDEN

Fonteyn returns to Ashton ballet

THERE was once a rumour going the rounds that Margot Fonteyn had given up her rôle in Ashton's *Symphonic Variations*. Rumour which at the time we predicted was probably a lying jade, has happily proved again to be just that. The one-hundred-and-fourteenth performance of this ballet at Covent Garden on March 8 saw her back again, flanked by Rosemary Lindsay and Annette Page and cavaliered by Somes, Shaw and Trecu. It amounted to one of the best performances I have seen of this masterly work for many years. It is also pleasant to state that the orchestra, conducted by Kenneth Alwen and with the solo piano played by Jean Gilbert, combined to make César Franck's variations extremely agreeable to listen to as well.

I have, in the past, stated that this ballet needs Fonteyn as much as she needs it. This recent performance underlined this fact. There is certainly no other dancer in the Royal Ballet who is yet able to replace her in it. After the conglomeration of rôles, mainly full-length ones, we have seen her in lately, one welcomes the opportunity of again being made aware of the exquisite purity of her line. The very fact that two other dancers are doing almost identical things at the same time makes one even more conscious of the qualities that have made her the ballerina that she is. The way her arms and legs make a perfect composition at all times in this work is something which singles her out from the rest. Not that the other two were not good—far from it—but they both tend to "dance" their rôles without feeling them. There is a feeling of effort with them, whereas Fonteyn flows through it all as though she was actually borne on the sound of the music.

Two of the boys—Somes and Shaw—are of the original cast. Shaw is, as he always was, splendid. Somes is tending to look rather stiff and unyielding; a little more panther grace would add so much to this central male figure. Trecu has now got himself well installed in the old Henry Danton-John Hart rôle and he makes a perfect balance with Shaw which gives a symmetry to the ballet; in the past it was apt to be a little lop-sided in the male section.

It seems time that a little fresh attention was paid to the lighting of this work. It is getting a porridgy look and the white figures do not stand out sharply enough. There are certain ballets which almost benefit by us not being able to see the dancers too clearly—this is not one of them.

This same programme also saw Fifield's first performance as the Ballerina in *Petrushka*. Taking over the rôle at very short notice and without a proper stage rehearsal (Nerina, who should have danced the rôle, suddenly went as a guest artist to Turkey), she gave a very good account of herself. She seems more suitable to the part than was Fonteyn and manages to achieve the coquettishness of the puppet as well as conveying her cruel, brittle nature. With more rehearsal and performances, she will doubtless improve it but she has really got the idea and she had "lost" herself more in the rôle than Fonteyn did in her early performances.

Franklin White made a very good job of the Showman though both he and Ashton fail to make the sudden appearance of the flute, in the opening scene, a conjuror's gesture. Neither do they shake the spit out of it before starting to play—an amusing moment which helped to build up the part. I also liked the way in which White crossed the fairground in the last scene: he became a figure whom all the surrounding merrymakers seemed to recognise and respect.

The company had vastly improved on its earlier performances and it is now possible to see many amusing little scenes going on in the crowd. I particularly liked Rosemary Lindsay as the chief Nursemaid. She is bundly, lovable and obvious prey for the wolfish coachmen. I wish something could be done about the aristocratic people, as they really amount to nothing. Surely the rich mother and her daughter should be preceded by their two grooms; in the old days their object was to clear the way. There used to be charming scenes as the mother greeted her friends and stopped her daughter from looking at the peepshow. The lighting of the final scene is still bad and the snow still falls far too late. At the moment there is a rather blank moment before the coachmen's dance. As far as I can remember, this is where the snow used to start to fall—but very slightly. It works up later to the veritable snow storm which Covent Garden have so far denied us.

Nevertheless, in spite of these few minor faults, it is a production of which everybody has good reason to be proud.

Fifield as Imperial ballerina

FOLLOWING on her first attempt at the Ballerina in *Petrushka*, Fifield, on April 10, made a first attempt at another Ballerina—in Balanchine's *Ballet Imperial*. What a difficult rôle this is! Almost immediately the Ballerina has to go into a very complicated *cadenza* which must be as nerve-racking as going straight into the *Rose Adagio* in *The Sleeping Beauty*. Fifield came through it all with colours flying. In fact, apart from the title rôle in *Madame Chrysanthème*, this is the rôle that has best suited her since she came to Covent Garden. She danced with lyrical beauty and a real sense of musical phrasing. What is more she brought feeling to it all and danced with a slight smile which never became strained or false. She was grand, yet she gave the impression that she was thoroughly enjoying herself.

As her cavalier, David Blair was magnificent. It is not easy to bring any sort of personality or characterisation to this type of Balanchine ballet. Yet if the ballet is not eventually to become a bore, both these things are quite essential. Blair's personality shines through the intricacies of the choreography yet without adding something that neither Balanchine nor Tchaikovsky require. His slow walk on and off in the second movement was done as well as it is by Michael Somes—high praise this—and he partnered and danced with the sort of virile grace which was, in the past, the trademark of the best Diaghilev dancers. Both these young artists gave the whole work a new elegance.

Anya Linden was supported by two bouncy boys—Gary Burne and Christopher Newton—in the *pas de trois*. The fact that the solo pianist, Courtney Kenny, was most unreliable, did not, unfortunately, help Linden much. She came rather unstuck at times and it was only when she had support from her two cavaliers that it all came together again. She looks just right and has plenty of attack and doubtless when she gets more assistance from the music she will come somewhere near to Beryl Grey who created the rôle when the Royal Ballet first gave this imposing work. As the two green girls, Maryon Lane and Annette Page were as good as anyone I have ever seen in these secondary rôles.

The male *corps* were rather splendid all through, the girls a considerable improvement on a previous performance when they resembled nothing so much as a collection of windmills I once remember seeing in a sequence from an Alfred Hitchcock picture. There is no doubt that this ballet is at its best as an opening work in any programme. The necessary precision is hard to achieve when dancers are tired from expending their energies in other works.

In this programme, *Ballet Imperial* was followed by a *Daphnis and Chloe* almost ruined by some horrid noises alien to Ravel's score. To give this score without the vocal chorus is like showing a dancer without arms. Admittedly the Covent Garden chorus was on tour at the time, but to even think of presenting this music without them seems to show incredible lack of respect for one of the finest ballet scores that this century has yet produced.

Grant as Satan

THERE is no doubt that certain rôles bring out qualities in dancers which are reflected in other works. It may have been the thought and care which Alexander Grant obviously gave to his Petrushka that inspired him to re-assess his approach to Satan in de Valois's *Job*, making its annual come-back in this same programme. Whatever it was, there was no doubt that Grant today gives this rôle as well as its creator—Anton Dolin. He is now Lucifer, Son of the Morning, the fallen angel trying to reinstate himself in the kingdom of heaven rather than a grotesque figure of evil—this is how he should be. He makes Satan powerful, with a certain grace and a fawning nature. His fall down the steps, when he is finally repelled by Job's Godhead, could still be a little more dramatic and spectacular. This is less easy to achieve on the stage of Covent Garden where the steps are shallower, wider and more numerous than used to be the case when the ballet was given at Sadler's Wells.

So many years of seeing this noble and monumental work may perhaps have dulled one's appreciation, and it does seem to move rather slowly. But the Biblical grandeur of Vaughan Williams's score can still evoke awe, even from an orchestra which made such coarsely-cut mincemeat of poor Ravel but a few minutes before. In her choreography, de Valois has been true to the score and to the spirit of that British mystic, William Blake. Like *Checkmate* this work remains a monument to the resourcefulness of the early striving years of the Vic-Wells ballet. **Peter Williams**

Beryl Grey's farewell

IN this season Beryl Grey's dancing has varied greatly in quality and, because of this, the majority of her admirers must have attended *Le Lac des Cygnes*, her farewell performance as a member of the Royal Ballet, with their fingers crossed. There was an atmosphere of tense expectancy, but she rose to the occasion triumphantly and danced with an almost unequalled, unruffled brilliance. I, for one, have never seen her dance Odette-Odile better.

In past performances she has been inclined to smile too much and too invitingly. Now that these smiles are diminished in number, she radiates greater authority and dignity.

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In this work her special qualities are displayed to perfection—her extremely personal and fluid *port de bras*, her strong back with her beautiful line and an *arabesque* so exciting that it can only be termed breath-taking.

Technically, her whole performance was an even and smooth one. From the aspect of interpretation, her performance was also even; by which I mean that she did not put all her skill and energy into giving more weight to one characterisation at the expense of the other. But while she did not seem to be more at home as Odette than as Odile, and vice versa, her performance indicated that there is still room for both interpretations to be developed.

But, Fonteyn excepted, which other ballerina achieves the perfect contrast? In some cases the contrast is only given by the change of costume, and it would be amusing to see how much a ballerina could convey to the audience if, as Odile, she had to wear the white costume instead of the black *tutu*. Grey, however, does hint at Odile's evil personality and adds to her interpretation the supreme grand manner and *bravura* of her dancing, which in Act III was exciting and spectacular, while all her turns were beautifully timed, vertical, executed with speed and precision, and beautifully finished.

Above all, I think that Beryl Grey's most notable and special characteristic over the years has been her quality of immense warmth and sincerity. Her weakness has always been on the interpretative side, but here she has had less encouragement and scope to develop than most dancers who have had rôles created for them. Except for Massine, she has been ignored by the choreographers. She has always strongly suggested that she dances with her heart rather than her mind, but as warmth is a quality so rare as to be remarkable in an English dancer, she has sometimes charmed us into forgiving her for one of her occasional unpolished or erratic performances.

After curtain calls so numerous that one grew tired of counting them, she reassured the audience (alas, with the prim diction of an English schoolgirl) that she would return to them every year as a guest artist. Recalling her most successful rôles (apart from Odette-Odile)—her Black Queen in *Checkmate*, La Capricciosa in *The Lady and the Fool*, her Lilac Fairy, her Queen of the Wilis, as Sylvia in *Sylvia*—only underlines the fact that she will be greatly missed. Missed, though, it seems, more by the public than by the management of the Royal Ballet. If her present form continues, her tour of South America should be a distinct success.

Chatfield partnered her remarkably well. His own *variation* was notable for the ease of his *pirouettes* and the precision of his *batterie*. His arms are beautifully carried in jumps and there is no suggestion of strain in the shoulders, giving his performance a most pleasing quality of elegance.

Most conspicuous in other rôles were Brian Shaw in the *pas de trois*, Meriel Evans and Catherine Boulton as leading swans, the latter has an amazingly high and clearly defined *grand jeté*, Pirmin Trecu in the Spanish dance, and Maryon Lane and Ray Powell leading the Czardas, which was danced with more brio than we are accustomed to.

DANCE FILMS

A programme presented by the London Ballet Circle at the Institut Français on March 20.

WE are fortunate to have an organisation such as the London Ballet Circle prepared to exhibit any type of film on dance. When one considers the variety of excellent films available on other arts, it is indeed depressing to have to admit that there are almost no ballet films at all worth the screening.

It is, therefore, hardly fair to attack the London Ballet Circle for this very dull programme. The first film was on the traditional dances of Sukumaland and of great interest to anthropologists, seeing that the culture of the Sukumaese appears to have become somewhat debased. Western influences were detected in the shape of the felt hats, feather boas and umbrellas of the "corps de ballet." Also shown were two films on the dances of Spain (their value somewhat depreciated by a commentary in Spanish), a terrible film on the making of ballet shoes in which almost every well-known dancer's name was mispronounced —anyway, every dancer has pulled a shoe to bits at some time and knows how one is made—and a film on Copenhagen designed for CinemaScope. Here, the distortion on the small screen made everyone look 12 feet tall and every car like Stephenson's Rocket.

The most interesting was an amateur film of the Bolshoi Company's programme of *divertissements* at Croydon. It is a useful record and similar to Madame Rambert's early Ballet Club films, but a museum piece and not an example of cinematic skill. It is without music and in fairness to the Bolshoi I think its screening should be restricted to members of the ballet profession.

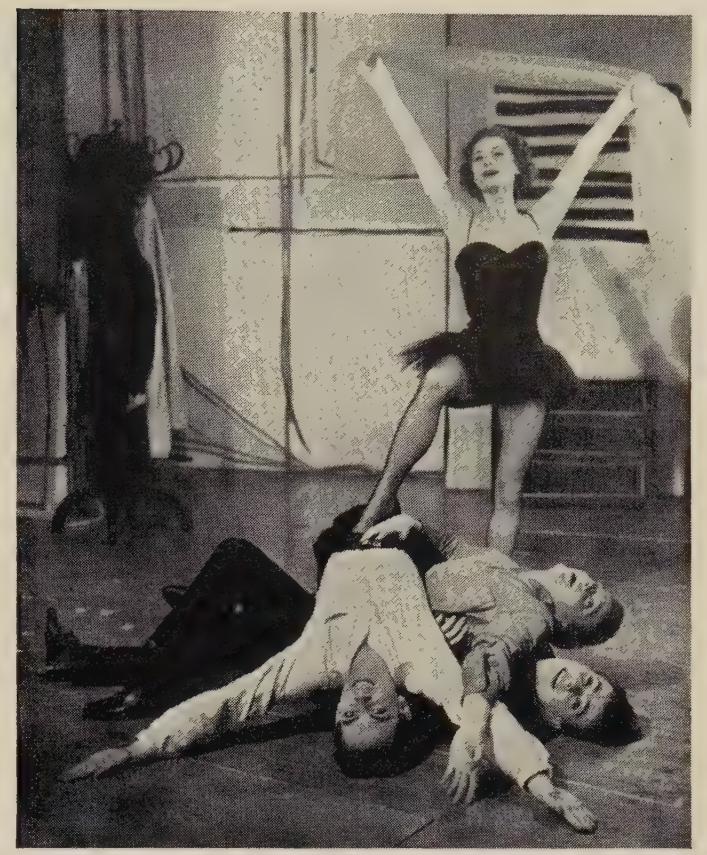
Recalling the now old Warner Brothers films of *Gaîté Parisienne* and *Capriccio Espagnol*, one cannot avoid asking why no British ballets have ever been filmed. If only private industry would take the place of the individual as patron of the arts! This has already been done in the case of Messrs. Schweppes, who provided the R.A.D. with a grant for the making of film strips. But surely ballet films have some commercial possibilities, too?

E. C. Mason

CRANKS *IN DENMARK: John Cranko's four-person revue,* Cranks, *has already been seen in four countries — Britain, America, Mexico and Denmark.*

For the Copenhagen production, Cranko chose four of the best young Danish artists. Here they are in one of the many witty numbers: Birgitte Reimer (standing), Flemming Skov, Erik Mork and Preben Uglejerg (from left to right on floor). The revue played for 150 *performances at Copenhagen's Mercury Theatre. This constitutes some kind of a record in Denmark.*

Photo: Mydtskov



MUSIC, MIME, DANCE

Harold Cheshire, Alexa Maxwell and Company. Given at the St. Pancras Town Hall on April 2.

I WOULD not term Harold Cheshire a mime artist. I prefer to think of him as an actor, with a distinct talent for make-up, who has deprived himself of the advantages of the spoken word. His deportment is somewhat unsteady, his mime a little vague, and his art well concealed. He has made a praiseworthy effort to provide a varied entertainment by including dances (tastefully arranged by Maria Zybina and Richard Cazimir) in his programme.

Some of his items are interesting. His *Chinese Laundry Boy* is as good as any that have been seen at Golders Green during the Christmas season. Others are so brief and concentrated that they remind one of the television commercial. For example, his *Mandarin and the Maid of Ming* would lend itself splendidly to advertising someone's Eastern restaurant. And in the flirtation of the fans in this item—well, fans lend themselves to all manner of selling inscriptions! This item has the added advantage of having music by Jones, rather pretty and tinkly, and not unlike the piano music we used to hear during a cinema interval. His *Japanese Courtesan* is quite as good as Beatrice Lillie's *Kabuki Lil*; although both artists approach this controversial figure from different directions, the results are curiously similar. In *The Garden*, to Boccherini's minuet, he gave us a memory of romantic youth, and took snuff with superb control, while his *Death of Pierrot* could well embellish *The Boy Friend*.

Some of the costumes were very striking, the most notable being an Oriental head-dress made out of cocktail sticks and Christmas decorations, and what appeared to be milk-bottle tops, but were, I am sure, really something else.

His programme was the most unforgettable event for me of that particular week, and some members of the audience did not hesitate to show similar feelings.

E. C. Mason

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and the *ensembles*, though still not good, are less ragged. But the group's principal defect is the same—an entirely inadequate technique.

I know that the artists must have a tremendous "feeling" for movement, but no amount of will power is ever likely to carry them round in a turn in *arabesque* if the *relevés* and supporting knees lack strength. Consequently the choreographic range is restricted, and, as the evening progresses, the general effect becomes more monotonous.

Concerning the music, Hettie Loman makes good use of its rhythmic content, but pays limited attention to its mood and atmosphere. Molly Kenny, the best of the dancers, has a pleasing appearance, but one feels that her talents are never likely to be even more than partially exploited by this company. Sally Archbutt's dancing is adequate, but her interpretations are very heavy going for the audience. She is just too, too intense and lacks repose to a remarkable degree. Timothy Hext also has a good appearance and has improved technically, but he is called upon to interpret rôles which demand too much maturity from so young a dancer.

The dances themselves are terribly intense, even the comedy items, and there is no hint of wit or sophistication. The rest of the company are almost up to amateur standard. Shimon Levy should have remembered that he was at the Arts Theatre, and not the Empress Hall.

E. C. Mason

Dance and Dancers . . . ABROAD

FRANCE

THE JUGOSLAV BALLET

THE Théâtre Sarah-Bernhardt has been officially renamed the Théâtre des Nations, and the intention of its director, M. Julien, is to present there ballet, opera and drama companies from all over the world. This international festival was inaugurated by the opera company of the National Theatre, Belgrade, and during the season the ballet wing put on a programme, on March 28 and 30, consisting of three works by Dmitrije Parlic, one excellent, one honourable, and one innocuous, if a little long.

An essay in conventional orientalism, *Conte Chinois*, is conceived with facility, vivacity and clarity despite a somewhat complex scenario. It enabled one to appreciate the high standard of mime in the company and in particular the grace of Ruth Parnel (Yui-Tang), Jovanka Bjegojevic (Tien-Vou), who was seen last year with Jean Babilée's company, and the very acrobatic style of Ivica Sertic (Prince Tou-Ou). Kresimir Baronovic's music is rather banal, and Dusan Ristic's costumes even less successful.

Bartók's *The Miraculous Mandarin* is, beyond doubt, an impressive work, not only from the viewpoint of the music, but also on this occasion from those of choreography and décor. An ingenious stage construction on two levels, by Dusan Ristic, strikes at once the strange atmosphere of the ballet. On the lower level is the miserable room of the prostitute, surrounded by spiders' webs, in which are ensnared, one after another, the victims she attracts in the street, where dreamy mistiness shades the brutal brilliance of neon lights. Dmitrije Parlic's choreography, drawing upon acrobatics as well as the classical vocabulary, succeeds in giving dramatic life to this street of ill-fame peopled by prostitutes and sailors.

The sordid crowd vanishes as, spurred on by the three thieves, the girl climbs the stairs to take up her beat on the pavement. Perfectly in accord with the sensuous, stabbing polytonality of the music, her seduction dance ensnares one by one an old roué, a timid young man, and then the miraculous mandarin, a choice prey whom nothing can kill but the fulfilment of his desire.

The tension grows incessantly until the climax, matching the development of the story and the music. While all taking part give good performances, two in particular stand out: first, Dusanka Sifnios, as the Prostitute, combining astonishing feline suppleness with a strong personality, and then the Mandarin, Stevan Grebeldinger, indifferent to start off, and then strained until his fate is sealed.

Le Coeur en Pain d'Epices, which brings the performance to an end on a fresh note of folklore, is of much less value. Unpretentious, it would gain by being cut, particularly in the second scene.

This young Jugoslavian Ballet offers, one may conclude, a happy synthesis of the Western and Russian styles with a marked predominance of the acrobatic element over pure classicism. There are some unusual personalities among the leading dancers. Discipline is perfect, the miming very developed as at Moscow. And with *The Miraculous Mandarin* Dmitrije Parlic has succeeded in producing a strong and well-balanced work.

Marie-Françoise Christout

AMERICA

BALLET RUSSE DE MONTE CARLO

THE Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo opened its two-week spring engagement at the Metropolitan Opera House on April 21 with *Giselle*, *pas de Deux Classique* and *Gaîté Parisienne*. In its first New York season in seven years the company is headed by Alicia Alonso as guest prima ballerina, Igor Youskevitch, Nina Novak and Alan Howard, with Yvonne Chouteau, Irina Borowska, Miguel Terekhov, Eugene Slavin, Dani Lamont and Kenneth Gillespie as soloists. Guest artists for the New York season are Alexandra Danilova and Frederic Franklin who are recreating their celebrated rôles in *Gaîté Parisienne* and *Le Beau Danube*.

The four New York premières include Jean

CONTE CHINOIS: *Ivica Sertic and Ruth Parnel in one of the works given by the Belgrade Ballet at the Festival des Nations in Paris.*
Photos: Lido

MIRACULOUS MANDARIN: *A scene from Dmitrije Parlic's version of Bartók's ballet, which was the greatest success of the Belgrade Ballet's Paris season.*

Cocteau's *Le Dame à la Licorne*, with choreography by Heinz Rosen to music of Jacques Chailley, and costumes by Cocteau executed by Karinska; *Harlequinade*, choreographed by the late Boris Romanoff to music of Riccardo Drigo; *Sombreros*, ballet by Leon Danielian, to Mexican folk music arranged by the Balles Russe conductor Ivan Boutnikoff and with costumes by William Cecil; and *The Mikado*, choreographed by Antonio Cobos to Sir Arthur Sullivan's music orchestrated by Vittorio Rieti and with décor by Bernard Lamotte. These works and the season as a whole will be reported in the July issue.

CANADIAN NATIONAL BALLET

THE Canadian National Ballet gave its only New York performances at the Brooklyn Academy of Music on March 30, too late for review in this issue. The two programmes included performances of Frederick Ashton's *Les Rendezvous*, Brian Macdonald's *Post-Script*, Grant Strate's *The Fisherman and His Soul* and *Jeune Pas de Deux*, David Adams' *Pas de Chance*, *Giselle* and *L'Après-Midi d'un Faune*. The leading rôles were danced by David Adams, Lois Smith and Celia Franca, and other featured artists included Lillian Jarvis, Colleen Kenney, Angela Leigh, Betty Pope, Earl Kraul, Ray Moller, Grant Strate, Glenn Gibson, Oldyna Dynowska and Richard Englund.

LE CLERCQ RETURNS

DURING mid-March, Tanaquil Le Clercq was flown to New York from Copenhagen, where she contracted polio last year. She is now at the Lennox Hill Hospital where she is beginning to receive visitors, talk to friends on the telephone, and catch up on her correspondence. This much-loved ballerina of the New York City Ballet Company seems in high spirits, and her friends on both sides of the Atlantic wish her continuing improvement.

Arthur Todd

WHAT RAMBERT IS UP AGAINST

continued from page 16

Roland Yerrell with décor and costumes by Disley Jones. For both these artists, this was their first work for a ballet company. We hope the ballet will be seen this year during our London season.

So far, I have outlined the present position of the Ballet Rambert and, I sincerely hope, that which it will occupy in the future. At the same time I have tried to explain and stress the great importance of the company's existence. It might complete the picture to outline the practical aims of the company as they are applied to its current repertoire and production.

It is hard to explain an art such as ballet in words without being trite or pompous, but I think our main aim is to create ballet that is beautiful through the validity of each of the component parts. The Ballet Rambert is a serious company and probably rehearses more hours each week than most. Much of this rehearsal is routine work enforced on a small company through the usual hazards of illness and accident, but the rest is devoted mostly to the creation of convincing rôles and their relationship to the production as a whole. All this time the essentials are being brought out and the superfluous reduced, so that what the audience sees is the very essence of the work. The mood or musical feeling of the ballet is brought out in each member of the company—in a sense, whether they like it or not.

It is this being alive to the whole of oneself and aware of one's responsibilities to the whole production all the time that one is on the stage that gives the Ballet Rambert its distinctive style. It accounts a great deal, I think, for the rapid success of dancers when they leave the Ballet Rambert for other companies.

The value of a work of art bears no relation to its size. Many of the numerically smaller productions of the Ballet Rambert possess an intensity and theatrical validity far greater than those of some larger companies. With an organisation of our size it is of course practical to keep an eye on the individual development of each dancer and bring out the talent available.

The Ballet Rambert has never been either a vehicle to show off stars, or the means of mounting lavish spectacle. It is the means whereby ballets are brought to an attentive audience with as great a theatrical conviction and unity as possible. It is in this effort that its importance lies, regardless of the difficulties it faces in the endeavour.

COVER STORIES

This month's front cover, by Richard Sasso, is of Alicia Markova in the second act of *Giselle*. She will be dancing this ballet, partnered by David Blair, during June with the Royal Ballet at Covent Garden.

ALICIA MARKOVA received her first training at a local academy in Palmer's Green, London. Her first public appearance was in the pantomime *Dick Whittington* at the Kennington Theatre. Later she studied with Seraphine Astafieva in whose studio she was seen by Diaghilev, who engaged her for his company. Rapidly Markova was moved from the *corps de ballet* to take over soloist and star rôles. After the Diaghilev Ballet was disbanded, Markova appeared in music halls and with Rambert's Ballet Club. She was the first ballerina of the Vic-Wells (now Royal) Ballet. In 1935 she helped to form the Markova-Dolin Ballet with Anton Dolin. When that disbanded in 1938, Markova joined Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo. Later she appeared with many companies and danced with Dolin all over the world. In 1950 she formed, again with Dolin, London's Festival Ballet. Since she left that company she has appeared in many parts of the globe as guest ballerina. She is without question one of the great ballerinas of this century.

Ballet Dates

THE ROYAL BALLET
at Covent Garden

May
21 *Noctambules, Petrushka, Coppélia Act III*
25 (M) *Les Patineurs, The Firebird, Ballet Imperial*
25 (E) *Les Patineurs, The Firebird, Ballet Imperial*
30 *The Shadow, Giselle* (Markova, Blair)
31 *Les Patineurs, Giselle* (Nerina)

June
1 (M) *The Shadow, Les Sylphides* (Markova), *Petrushka*
3 *The Lady and the Fool, Les Sylphides* (Markova), *The Firebird*
5 *The Shadow, Giselle* (Beriosova, Chatfield)
7 *Les Patineurs, The Sleeping Beauty Act III* (Markova), *The Lady and the Fool*
8 (M) *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Nerina, Blair)
8 (E) *The Sleeping Beauty* (Beriosova) Chatfield)
10 *The Sleeping Beauty* (Nerina, Blair)
12 *Noctambules, The Sleeping Beauty Act III* (Markova), *The Firebird.*
15 (M) *The Lady and the Fool, Giselle* (Markova)
15 (E) *The Lady and the Fool, Petrushka, Les Patineurs*
18 *The Prince of the Pagodas* (Linden, Hynd)
19 *The Prince of the Pagodas* (Beriosova, Chatfield)
22 (M) *Petrushka, Giselle* (Nerina)
22 (E) *Petrushka, Giselle* (Markova, Blair)

THE ROYAL BALLET
from Sadler's Wells Theatre

May
25–June 3 Madrid
6, 7 The Opera House, Cologne
11–15 Stadttheater, Zurich
17 Holland Festival (1 week)

July
1 The Sadler's Wells Theatre, London (3 weeks)

BALLET RAMBERT

May
20 Grand Theatre, Swansea
27 The Pavilion, Torquay

July
30 The Sadler's Wells Theatre, London (2 weeks)

FESTIVAL BALLET

May
6–28 Théâtre des Champs-Elysées, Paris (3 weeks)
29–31 Wiesbaden (Festival)

June
4–8 Landes Theatre, Stuttgart
14–23 Teatro Manzoni, Milan
25–29 Rome or Florence (Festival)

July
1–2 Open Air Theatre (Festival), Geneva
3–5 Theatre Municipal (Festival), Lausanne
9–Sept. 7 Royal Festival Hall, London

THE ROYAL DANISH BALLET FESTIVAL
at the Royal Theatre, Copenhagen

May
18 *Fanfare, La Sylphide, Floral Fete at Genzano*
19 *The Sleeping Beauty*
20 *Les Sylphides* with Honegger's *Joan of Arc at the Stake*
21 *Apollon Musagète, Coppélia*
25 *Romeo and Juliet*
26 *La Ventana, Les Sylphides, Graduation Ball*
27 *La Ventana, Apollon Musagète, Night Shadow, Fanfare*
28 *Swan Lake, Act II, Kermesse at Bruges*
29 *Serenade, Coppélia*
30 *Serenade, Pas de Quatre, Myth, Floral Fete at Genzano*
31 *The Sleeping Beauty*

THE ROYAL SWEDISH BALLET FESTIVAL

June
1, 3 At the Royal Theatre, Stockholm
2 At the Drottningholm Theatre

WESTERN THEATRE BALLET

June
24 Dartington Hall, Devon

July
1–3 Globe Theatre, Plymouth
4, 5 Queen's Hall Barnstaple
6 Secondary Modern School, Wivelis-combe
8, 9 The Pavilion, Exmouth
10 Priory School Hall, Exmouth.
11, 12 Manor Pavilion Theatre, Sidmouth.
13 Arts Centre, Bridgewater
15 Theatre Royal, Bristol

CITY BALLET SOCIETY

June
14 The London Ballet Circle presents a programme, with guest artists Gillian Lynn and four members of the Royal Ballet, at the King George's Hall, Tottenham Court Road, London, at 7.30 p.m.

EDUARDO and NAVARRO
(Spanish Group)

May
30 The Winter Garden, Eastbourne

EUROPEAN FESTIVALS

Granada (June 24–July 4) Paris Opéra Ballet and other companies
Llangollen, Wales (July 9–14) Folk dance groups from Europe and America.
FESTIVAL OF NERVI, Genoa, Italy
July
20, 21 800 Italian dancers and *Pas de Quatre* (Markova, Chauviré, Schanne, Fracci)
24, 25 Grand Ballet du Marquis de Cuevas
27, 28 Luisillo and Spanish Dance Theatre
30–Aug. 2 Paris Opéra Ballet

EDINBURGH FESTIVAL

Aug.
19–24 Grand Ballet du Marquis de Cuevas
26–31 Les Ballets Africains de Keita Fodèba
Sept.
2–7 The Royal Swedish Ballet

NEXT MONTH
LOOK FOR

EUROPEAN FESTIVALS: Photographs and opinion of Europe's many summer festivals. BALLET RUSSE DE MONTE CARLO in New York: Pictures and an article by ARTHUR TODD. BACK-STAGE AT COVENT GARDEN: the work of the electricians. MONTE CARLO STORY: More about the season organised by John Taras. Many articles of topical interest and all the regular features.

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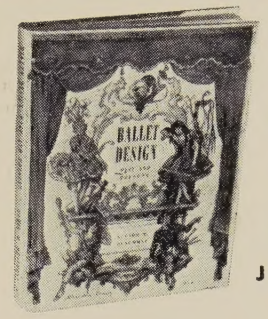
SEVEN ARTS BOOK CLUB *Bulletin*

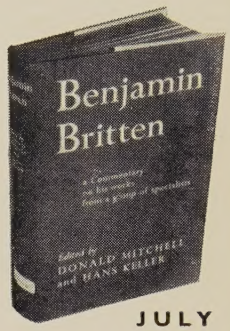
A Monthly News Bulletin for Members **No. 1 June 1957**

WHAT the critics said about a book is perhaps the reader's best guide to its value and authority, and so this first bulletin is devoted to extracts from press reviews of some of the Club's first Selections and Optional Extras, which are offered in the advertisement in the centre page this month. The books chosen by the Club Selection Committee all had enthusiastic reviews from the critics.

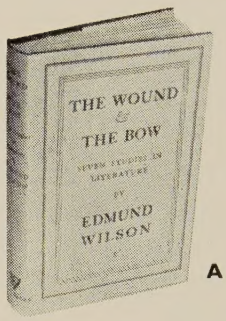


JUNE

Pictured here are the first six Optional Extras



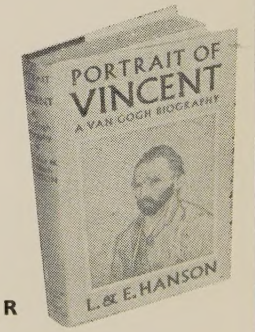
JULY



AUGUST

SEPTEMBER

OCTOBER



NOVEMBER

PEGGY ASHCROFT

Mr. Keown follows Miss Ashcroft's career from her schoolgirl acting to the present day. It is a glowing record of achievement of our second great lady of the theatre—amply illustrated by a fine series of photographs.—*Daily Telegraph.*

Eric Keown, the urbane critic of *Punch*, sketches her whole astonishing career both pithily and accurately—his commentary winds through the well-chosen photographs.—Alan Dent in the *News Chronicle.*

A TREE IS A TREE

There are plenty of amusing stories. The difficulties of directing Miss Marion Davies in comedy, with Hearst objecting to custard pie throwing as undignified. The eccentricities of the late John Gilbert, using dialogue from *The Green Hat* to make impromptu love to Miss Beatrice Lillie, and sleeping with a gigantic automatic pistol.The *Observer.*

He (King Vidor) records some of the antics of the inhabitants (of Hollywood) and records the incredibly stupid methods of work which one of the biggest executives in the business employs and induces others to follow. He is at his best when concentrating on the technical aspects of his work, and his comments on the differences between his own methods of directing and those of D. W. Griffith are fascinating. Lilian Gish emerges as a real person and Mr. Vidor has one or two illuminating stories to tell of Mr. Chaplin.—*The Times Literary Supplement.*

It is full of good stories.—Dilys Powell in the *Sunday Times.*

GROUCHO

Intensely interesting. . . . There is not one item of this full, rich existence that we would willingly miss. . . . An account of a fantastic dinner-party given by the Groucho Marxes, a wild delight to read about. . . . Many superb examples could be quoted of his lightning-quick repartee.—G. B. Stern in the *Sketch.*

Full of good jokes in the Marx tradition. . . . Arthur Marx has made a good job of the almost impossible in transferring Marxian humour from stage and screen into a book.—*Manchester Evening News.*

I found this biography refreshing and delightful. . . . Groucho has got a good measure of laughter in it. . . . But what gave me greatest pleasure was the spirit of deep, but by no means uncritical, filial love with which the book is written.—Arthur Calder Marshall on the B.B.C.

BALLET DESIGN

A magnificent condensation of the history of the subject and the captions give the impression of being shown round a gallery by an expert.—*The Listener.*

Magnificent collection of pictures of ballet costumes and settings.—*The Scotsman.*

BALLET IN MOSCOW TODAY

She (Kirsova) brings to her writing the authority of a lifetime spent as a dancer and choreographer in Russian companies inspired by the ideas of Diaghilev and Fokine. We have for the first time in English a critical discussion and proper record of the Bolshoi Company.—*The Times Educational Supplement.*

Finely produced and lavishly illustrated . . . accompanied by many action photographs and portraits, and an analysis of stories and technique.—*The Stage.*

The author has written brief critical appreciations of twenty-five dancers, from Ulanova and Lepechinskaya downwards, indicating the roles which they commonly take and those in which they excel.—*The Times Literary Supplement.*

CENTURY OF BRITISH PAINTING

A Century of British Painting is a book which badly needed writing and there are not many who could have written it so well as Mr. Bertram.—*Art News and Reviews.*

A serious study of the trends of the last century with an excellent section of illustrations about a third of which are in colour.—*John O'London's Weekly.*

It is a book of surprises, richly illustrated, and we enjoyed every page. We agree with the claim made by the publisher that it is a book alike for the specialist and for the general reader.—*National Society for Art Education.*

THE WOUND AND THE BOW

Edmund Wilson is probably the greatest living American critic . . . his wisdom is as wide as his style is readable, so that one can reach his essay on Dickens or his study of Kipling who, up to the age of six, talked, thought and dreamed in Hindustani, or his piece on Hemingway, who makes beauty out of the beast in man, with pleasure and profit.—*Hull Daily Mail.*

BENJAMIN BRITTEN

A most important book on the most important of the younger musical figures of our day. . . . 24 detailed and exhaustive chapters of penetrating analysis and apt comment . . . a work of vast enterprise.—Ernest Bradbury in the *Yorkshire Post.*

It will heighten the interest of those already enthralled and awaken it in others to whom his work is still unfamiliar.—Eric Blom in the *Observer.*

Valuable studies of Mr. Britten's work in all its genius by a number of writers of high competence.—Ernest Newman in the *Sunday Times.*

PORTRAIT OF VINCENT

Mr. and Mrs. Hanson have repeated the striking and richly deserved success which they won for their life of Paul Gauguin. They have invented a new type of artistic biography in which fact and criticism are adroitly mingled to produce a most readable narrative. For the general reader who wishes to acquire a knowledge of Van Gogh's career there could be no better book than the *Portrait of Vincent*; and if the serious scholar of art-history were to be restricted to a single bock about him, this would meet authoritatively most of his special needs.—*Birmingham Post.*

This is the best biography yet to appear on Van Gogh; telling the story of his whole life with its miseries, pains, exaltations and labours. For the present this is the definitive story of Van Gogh.—*Queen.*

D. H. LAWRENCE: NOVELIST

This story of D. H. Lawrence is important, deserving to be widely read and very carefully considered.—J. B. Priestley.

One of the most brilliant chapters in recent literary criticism.—*Daily Telegraph.*

A book of historical importance and constructive critical force . . . his new analysis . . . puts him far above the majority of our critics.—*Sunday Times.*

This is much the best book on Lawrence's work which has appeared . . . any serious critic of Lawrence will in future have to take this as his starting point. —*Scotsman.*

PILLARS OF DRURY LANE

In *Pillars of Drury Lane* Mr. W. Macqueen Pope demonstrated that his romantic zest for the subject is quite unexhausted. Of the lesser-known men and women who have made the Lane's 283 years of history he finds plenty to say that will come fresh to the general reader; from old prompt books he digs out interesting information about theatre customs; and he recalls partly from the records and partly from his own enviably retentive memory, incidents from the days of spectacular dramas and pantomimes to those of the big musicals of Ivor Novello and Rodgers and Hammerstein. His chapter on Ensa's war-time occupation of the theatre is a valuable piece of first-hand reporting.—*The Times.*

His zest, his love of the personalities of the theatrical profession (as opposed to "show business") and his magnificent memory always make him worth reading. —*The Times Literary Supplement.*

GREAT OPERA HOUSES

The actual information it contains about the lengths of the seasons at different opera houses, the confusion of function between L'Opera and L'Opera-comique in Paris, the genealogy of Augustus Harris and a thousand and one other such oddities which are hard to authenticate, is valuable. The book's mixture of enthusiasm, strange learning and entertainment will commend it to all who care for opera.—*The Times Literary Supplement.*

The many anecdotes, historical and personal, give an added flavour to what in any case is a highly amusing and informative book.—*Opera.*

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